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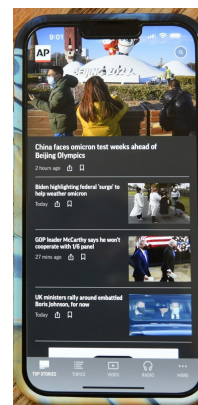
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# Connecting

June 19, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this June 19, 2023,

Today is Juneteenth, a federal holiday commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. Deriving its name from combining June and nineteenth, it is celebrated on the anniversary of the order by Major General Gordon Granger proclaiming freedom for slaves in Texas on June 19, 1865.

You may find these AP stories of interest:

[The story behind Juneteenth and how it became a federal holiday](#)

[Americans mark Juneteenth with parties, events and quiet reflection on the end of slavery](#)

Connecting brings you sad news of the death of our colleague **George Gedda**, a longtime AP State Department correspondent, who died Sunday at the age of 82. His

coverage of the State Department and international relations spanned more than four decades and played a major role in explaining U.S. foreign policy to the American public from Vietnam to Cuba, Afghanistan and Iraq.

If you have a memory of George to share, please send it along.

Here's to a great week ahead – be safe, stay healthy, live each day to your fullest.

Paul

## Longtime AP State Department reporter George Gedda dies at 82



(1978 AP Photo, File)

By **MATTHEW LEE**

WASHINGTON (AP) — George Gedda, a workhorse veteran of The Associated Press whose coverage of the State Department and international relations spanned more than four decades and played a major role in explaining U.S. foreign policy to the American public from Vietnam to Cuba, Afghanistan and Iraq, has died. He was 82.

Gedda was also the author of three books, including one on his time as an AP diplomatic correspondent, one on Cuba's communist revolution, and one on his first love, baseball. He died Sunday while in hospice care in Altamonte Springs, Florida, said Ellen James Martin, his former partner of 14 years. The cause was bladder cancer, she said.

Gedda had retired to central Florida in 2007 after a 41-year career at the AP, most of which was in Washington, beginning during Lyndon Johnson's administration and not ending until George W. Bush was president.

During his time in Washington, Gedda covered every secretary of state from Dean Rusk to Condoleezza Rice, carving out a niche for himself as an expert on Latin America and Cuba.

"You are a first-class professional and a role model for many who will follow you," Rice said in a handwritten note to Gedda on the occasion of his retirement. Rice said he had had an "exceptional career of service to our nation's founding principle — a free press."

The late Colin Powell, Rice's predecessor as secretary of state, also had fond memories of Gedda. "You played an invaluable role in helping the American people understand the issues of the day," Powell wrote. "Play Ball!"

From his perch at the State Department, the soft-spoken and unfailingly polite and patient Gedda made himself an invaluable partner for both fellow AP reporters and competitors, including his often irascible colleague and officemate, the late and legendary AP diplomatic correspondent Barry Schweid.

"For more than 30 years, George Gedda and I worked harmoniously and effectively together at the State Department covering the world for the AP," Schweid said when Gedda retired. "He simply knew more than anyone else about the issues. And a lot of what he knew was stored in his mind, a bank of knowledge I found myself calling on regularly, especially in pressure situations."

"As a colleague, George was a true gentleman and a superb correspondent," said longtime NBC News correspondent and anchor Andrea Mitchell. "As a young correspondent he was a patient mentor to me and very welcoming when I was a newcomer to the beat."

"George was the consummate AP professional," said Jamie Rubin, who served as State Department spokesman during the Clinton administration, when Madeleine Albright was the country's top diplomat. "I vividly remember whether I said something brilliant or not so brilliant he always got it exactly right. He always reported the facts without fear or favor. He was also a great travel buddy."

Shaun Tandon, the current president of the State Department Correspondents Association, said Sunday: "For many of us who grew up aspiring to cover the State Department, George set the model — always diplomatic, but also unflappable and with an unmatched depth of knowledge. Today's State Department press corps owes a debt of gratitude to George for making us what we are today — professionals dedicated to thorough and rigorous coverage of US foreign policy. His legacy lives on."

A native of Valley Spring, New York, and 1962 graduate of Southern Methodist University, Gedda started with the AP in New York in 1965 after a two-year stint with the Peace Corps in Venezuela. He then moved to the AP statehouse bureau in Richmond, Virginia, where he spent two years wanting to cover sports before being promoted and returning briefly to AP headquarters on the international desk.

In September 1968, as the nation was still convulsed with the aftermath of the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, Gedda was transferred to the AP's Washington bureau, where he spent the rest of his career often focusing on Western Hemisphere affairs.

Gedda made 31 trips to Cuba, most of which were reporting visits for the AP beginning in 1974. He was instrumental in the agency's creation of its first bureau in Havana since the 1960s in 1999, and used those experiences as the basis for his 2011 book "Cuba: The Audacious Revolution."

Cuba, he recalled in the preface to his book, made the biggest impression of the 87 countries he visited while covering various secretaries of state.

"At some point during my travels as a diplomatic correspondent, I concluded that perhaps no country was more interesting than Cuba," he wrote. "All countries have their peculiarities and charms and rough edges but, to me, Cuba was in a class by itself."

In 2014, Gedda published a memoir of his time as a diplomatic correspondent in a book titled "The State Department — More Than Just Diplomacy: The Personalities, Turf Battles, Danger Zones for Diplomats, Exotic Datelines, Miscast Appointees, the Laughs — And, Sadly, the Occasional Homicide," which mixed humor with sharp insights into the conduct of American foreign policy and its often strange cast of characters.

But, his first book, published in 2009, was devoted to his primary non-professional passion — baseball — a love that began as a six-year-old in Long Island rooting for the Brooklyn Dodgers. "Dominican Connection: Talent from the Tropics Changes Face of National Pastime" explored the unusual success that athletes from the Dominican Republic have had in Major League Baseball.

Gedda is survived by his daughters Sara Gedda of Sorrento, Florida, and Deborah Gedda Force from Port St. Lucie, Fla.

Click [here](#) for link to this story. Shared by Myron Belkind.

### *AP honored in four categories*

## 2022 Sigma Delta Chi Award Honorees

The Society of Professional Journalists is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2022 Sigma Delta Chi Awards for excellence in journalism.

Judges chose the winners from entries in categories covering print, radio, television and online. The awards recognize outstanding work published or broadcast in 2022.

Dating back to 1932, the awards originally honored six individuals for contributions to journalism. The current program began in 1939, when the Society granted the first Distinguished Service Awards. The honors later became the Sigma Delta Chi Awards.

Founded in 1909 as Sigma Delta Chi, SPJ promotes the free flow of information vital to a well-informed citizenry; works to inspire and educate the next generation of journalists; and protects First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and press.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Al Cross

## AP WINNERS

### PRINT / ONLINE / WIRE

Deadline Reporting (Single-issue circ 40k+ or online only)

Joshua Goodman, David Bauder, Hillel Italie, The Associated Press

-0-

Non-Deadline Reporting (Single-issue circ 40k+ or online only)

Mstyslav Chernov, Evgeniy Maloletka, Vasilisa Stepanenko, Lori Hinnant, The Associated Press

-0-

Breaking News Photography (Single-issue circ 40k+ or affiliated website/online only)

Fleeing war

Emilio Morenatti, Associated Press

-0-

Television Documentaries (Network/Syndication Service/Program Service)

Putin's Attack on Ukraine: Documenting War Crimes

Thomas Jennings, Producer/Director/Writer, FRONTLINE Annie Wong, Director, Producer, FRONTLINE Erika Kinetz, Producer/Reporter/Correspondent, AP, FRONTLINE (PBS)

## Look what I found!



**Peggy Walsh** - Going through files I found this version of the old printer/ pressman's hat that my dad showed me how to fold.

For those in the post press days (1990 or so, I think) these were used to keep ink out of their hair.

A young neighbor had show and tell for his class and I showed him how to teach them to fold it.

Back then there were newspapers to fold!

## Celebrating a birthday



**Wayne Chin** - former AP director, contracts administration - celebrated his 65th milestone birthday feasting on Maryland crabs with family at a local seafood restaurant in Frederick, MD. He is enjoying retirement to the fullest, traveling with his beautiful bride of 36 years and spending lots of time with his growing family.

## Married to journalism



[Mark Mittelstadt](#) - Visiting my 92-year-old mother recently at a Fort Dodge, Iowa, senior center, I came across this bench in one of the gardens. The person who donated it appears to have understood the often-challenging relationship between long hours of working journalists and their spouses. Well done.

### ***BEST OF THE WEEK — FIRST WINNER***

## **A boat carrying 180 Rohingya vanished, underscoring migration politics led to rise in deaths**





Sydney investigative correspondent Kristen Gelineau, who has covered the Rohingya crisis since 2017, heard from a young Rohingya source about a surge in people leaving a camp in Bangladesh. And then one boat vanished.

Her source heard of a recording of a call from a woman on board, along with video of the boat itself. “Please come to the camps,” he told her. “I have no power. You have the power to get this story out.”

A second source said she’d heard the captain’s entire family had been on board.

No officials had launched an investigation, and nobody had gone to the camps to figure out what happened. And no one had written a single word about the boat that had vanished.

It took two months of all-out lobbying, calling in favors from every contact in Bangladesh, to finally get a visa to go. Gelineau left 48 hours later, and Dhaka video journalist Al-emrun Garjon and photographer Mahmud Hossain Opu joined her.

They tracked down the husband of the woman on board who’d made the call and interviewed dozens of people, including some in a shelter in Sri Lanka who were on a second boat. Because of the impact trauma can have on people’s memories, Gelineau asked for corroborating evidence — call logs, audio recordings, videos and photos. A girl came forward with a separate audio recording of another call between her and her aunt, which proved crucial in nailing down the timeline of when the boat left Bangladesh.

Read more [here](#).

***BEST OF THE WEEK — SECOND WINNER***

# Multiformat voting rights package engages readers and puts AP out front of Supreme Court decision



A multiformat team across AP marked a watershed moment for one of the most important pieces of civil rights legislation in U.S. history by highlighting the voices of those who had been on the front lines of the struggle for voting rights and showing the impact of efforts to undermine the law.

June was the 10-year anniversary of a U.S. Supreme Court decision that overturned a major portion of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and also was when the court was due to make another decision with the potential to gut much of what remained of the law.

Lead elections reporter Christina Cassidy teamed with race and voting reporter Ayanna Alexander to explain what has happened to voting rights since the decision a decade ago, a story that included an exclusive analysis showing how certain states had moved to restrict voting. Many of those efforts almost certainly would have been thwarted without the Supreme Court's earlier ruling. The accompanying graphic by artist Kevin Vineys visualized how the states that once were required to get federal approval for election changes had passed 14 new restrictive laws, on everything from mail voting to ID requirements.

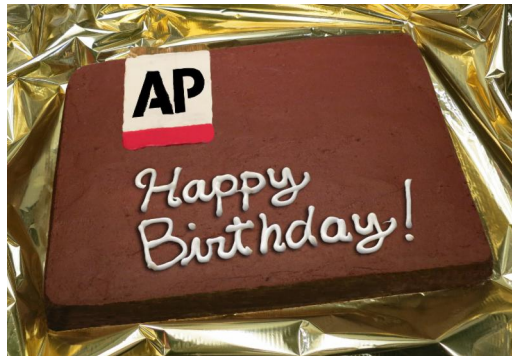
The full package moved ahead of the expected court ruling, which narrowly went in favor of Black voters in a congressional redistricting case out of Alabama.

In a separate series of stories, reporter Gary Fields identified people who were instrumental in the voting rights movement six decades ago, including some who

were present when then-President Lyndon Johnson signed the act into law. Fields conducted in-person interviews in three states and the District of Columbia. He also coordinated with Alabama statehouse reporter Kim Chandler on an interview with a woman who was just 14 when she was clubbed by police during a march that would prove pivotal in the voting rights movement.

Read more [here](#).

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Dennis Anderson](#)

[Jim Baltzelle](#)

[Helen Sosniecki](#)

## Stories of interest

### *How Local Officials Seek Revenge on Their Hometown Newspapers* (New York Times)

By Emily Flitter  
Reporting from Delhi, N.Y.

Two of the most powerful women in the village of Delhi in central New York sat face to face in a brick building on Main Street for what would become a fight over the First Amendment.

It was the fall of 2019. Tina Molé, the top elected official in Delaware County, was demanding that Kim Shepard, the publisher of The Reporter, the local newspaper, “do something” about what Ms. Molé saw as the paper’s unfair coverage of the county government.

Ms. Shepard stood her ground. Not long after, Ms. Molé struck where it would hurt The Reporter the most: its finances. The county stripped the newspaper of a lucrative contract to print public notices, subsequently informing The Reporter that the decision was partly based on “the manner in which your paper reports county business.”

The move cost The Reporter about \$13,000 a year in revenue — a significant blow to a newspaper with barely 4,000 subscribers.

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

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## ***Vietnam-era whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked Pentagon Papers, dies at 92*** (AP)

By HILLEL ITALIE

NEW YORK (AP) — Daniel Ellsberg, the history-making whistleblower who by leaking the Pentagon Papers revealed longtime government doubts and deceit about the Vietnam War and inspired acts of retaliation by President Richard Nixon that helped lead to his resignation, has died. He was 92.

Ellsberg, whose actions led to a landmark First Amendment ruling by the Supreme Court, had disclosed in February that he was terminally ill with pancreatic cancer. His family announced his death Friday morning in a letter released by a spokeswoman, Julia Pacetti.

“He was not in pain, and was surrounded by loving family,” the letter reads in part. “Thank you, everyone, for your outpouring of love, appreciation and well-wishes to Dan in the previous months. It all warmed his heart at the end of his life.”

Until the early 1970s, when he disclosed that he was the source for the stunning media reports on the 47-volume, 7,000-page Defense Department study of the U.S. role in Indochina, Ellsberg was a well-placed member of the government-military elite. He was a Harvard graduate and self-defined “cold warrior” who served as a private and government consultant on Vietnam throughout the 1960s, risked his life on the battlefield, received the highest security clearances and came to be trusted by officials in Democratic and Republican administrations.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Three NH men charged with conspiracy to harass and threaten NHPR journalists*** (Union Leader)

By Roberta Baker

Three New Hampshire men have been charged in connection with a conspiracy to harass and intimidate two New Hampshire Public Radio journalists — incidents that allegedly involved repeated threats and vandalism to their homes over a year ago.

Tucker Cockerline, 32, of Salem, Michael Waselchuck, 35, of Seabrook and Keenan Saniatan, 36, of Nashua, were each charged in Massachusetts with conspiring to commit stalking through interstate travel, according to a news release from the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. Cockerline and Waselchuck were arrested Friday morning and, after an appearance in federal court in Boston on Friday, were detained pending a hearing scheduled for June 20. Saniatan remains at large.

The alleged harassment and vandalism of the victims' homes and the home of one of the victim's immediate family members involved thrown bricks and large rocks and lewd and threatening language spray painted on garage doors, according to court documents. The incidents occurred on five separate occasions in April and May 2022.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

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## ***Kevin McCarthy prays for me, a mere journalist. Cool! Now, here are my questions | Opinion*** (Fresno Bee)

By TAD WEBER

Kevin McCarthy prays for me! As I need all the prayer help I can get, I will certainly accept his well-wishes. How do I know this? Because the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of America's most powerful leaders, told me so. Well, not me directly. Rather, he said it to the group of reporters who regularly cover him at the Capitol.

But I am sure he extends goodwill to me and all my colleagues at The Bee. Let's go out on a limb and believe that the House speaker prays for all of us in the Fourth Estate. In a social media posting made Thursday afternoon, the Republican from Bakersfield wrote this atop the video of him speaking to the reporters: "I worry about the constant negativity of the media. But I keep them in my prayers, and I hope one day they'll start rooting for America to succeed!"

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac.

## **Today in History - June 19, 2023**



### By The Associated Press

**Today is Monday, June 19, the 170th day of 2023. There are 195 days left in the year. This is Juneteenth.**

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

On June 19, 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was approved by the U.S. Senate, 73-27, after surviving a lengthy filibuster.

#### **On this date:**

In 1775, George Washington was commissioned by the Continental Congress as commander in chief of the Continental Army.

In 1865, Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War was over, and that all remaining slaves in Texas were free — an event celebrated to this day as “Juneteenth.”

In 1910, the first-ever Father’s Day was celebrated in Spokane, Washington. (The idea for the observance is credited to Sonora Louise Smart Dodd.)

In 1911, Pennsylvania became the first state to establish a motion picture censorship board.

In 1917, during World War I, King George V ordered the British royal family to dispense with German titles and surnames; the family took the name “Windsor.”

In 1934, the Federal Communications Commission was created; it replaced the Federal Radio Commission.

In 1944, during World War II, the two-day Battle of the Philippine Sea began, resulting in a decisive victory for the Americans over the Japanese.

In 1953, Julius Rosenberg, 35, and his wife, Ethel, 37, convicted of conspiring to pass U.S. atomic secrets to the Soviet Union, were executed at Sing Sing Prison in Ossining,

New York.

In 1975, former Chicago organized crime boss Sam Giancana was shot to death in the basement of his home in Oak Park, Illinois; the killing has never been solved.

In 1986, University of Maryland basketball star Len Bias, the first draft pick of the Boston Celtics, suffered a fatal cocaine-induced seizure.

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Louisiana law requiring any public school teaching the theory of evolution to teach creation science as well.

In 2014, Rep. Kevin McCarthy of California won election as House majority leader as Republicans shuffled their leadership in the wake of Rep. Eric Cantor's primary defeat in Virginia.

Ten years ago: Afghan President Hamid Karzai (HAH'-mihd KAHR'-zey) suspended talks with the United States on a new security deal to protest the way his government was left out of initial peace negotiations with the Taliban. President Barack Obama, speaking in front of Berlin's Brandenburg Gate, pledged to cut deployed U.S. nuclear weapons by one-third if Cold War foe Russia did the same. Actor James Gandolfini, 51, died while vacationing in Rome. Country singer Slim Whitman, 90, died in Orange Park, Florida.

Five years ago: The United States said it was pulling out of the United Nations' Human Rights Council, a day after the U.N. human rights chief denounced the Trump administration for separating migrant children from their parents; U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley cited longstanding U.S. complaints that the council was biased against Israel. Koko, a western lowland gorilla who was taught sign language at an early age as a scientific test subject and eventually learned more than 1,000 words, died at the Gorilla Foundation's preserve in California's Santa Cruz mountains at the age of 46. New York mayor Bill de Blasio said as of Sept. 1, police would start issuing summonses to people caught smoking marijuana in public rather than arresting them.

One year ago: The head of NATO warned that fighting between Russia and Ukraine could drag on "for years." British defense officials assessing the intense fighting in the Donbas region of Ukraine bordering Russia said morale among troops on both sides was growing troubled. Witnesses in Ethiopia said more than 200 ethnic Amhara were killed in an attack in the country's Oromia region and blamed a rebel group, which denied it. George Lamming, a novelist and essayist who was among the giants of post-colonial Caribbean writing, died at age 94.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Gena (JEH'-nuh) Rowlands is 93. Hall of Fame race car driver Shirley Muldowney is 83. Singer Elaine "Spanky" McFarlane (Spanky and Our Gang) is 81. Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi (soo chee) is 78. Author Sir Salman Rushdie is 76. Actor Phylicia Rashad is 75. Rock singer Ann Wilson (Heart) is 73. Musician Larry Dunn is 70. Actor Kathleen Turner is 69. Country singer Doug Stone is 67. Singer Mark "Marty" DeBarge is 64. Singer-dancer-choreographer Paula Abdul is 61. Actor Andy Lauer is 60. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is 59. Rock singer-musician Brian Vander Ark (Verve Pipe) is 59. Actor Samuel West is 57. Actor Mia Sara is 56. TV personality Lara Spencer is 54. Rock musician Brian "Head" Welch (Korn) is 53. Actor Jean Dujardin is 51. Actor Robin Tunney is 51. Actor Bumper Robinson is 49.

Actor Poppy Montgomery is 48. Alt-country singer-musician Scott Avett (The Avett Brothers) is 47. Actor Ryan Hurst is 47. Actor Zoe Saldana is 45. Former NBA star Dirk Nowitzki is 45. Actor Neil Brown Jr. is 43. Actor Lauren Lee Smith is 43. Rapper Macklemore (Macklemore and Ryan Lewis) is 41. Actor Paul Dano is 39. Texas Rangers pitcher Jacob DeGrom is 35. Actor Giacomo Gianniotti is 34. Actor Chuku Modu (TV: "The Good Doctor") is 33. Actor Atticus Shaffer is 25.

## 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.

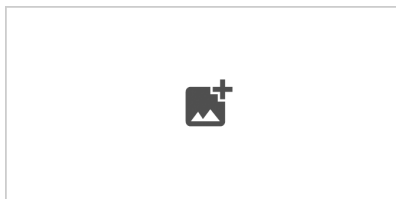
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

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

**Paul Stevens**

**Editor, Connecting newsletter**

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