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Connecting

July 7, 2023

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Colleagues:

Good Friday morning on this July 7, 2023.

Ye Old Editor sends greetings from Alcrataz. He'll be back in the Connecting seat Monday.



Paul, Linda and family (Molly, Sophie, Brennan, Jon and Arianna) in a view of San Francisco from Alcatraz.



Meantime, thank you for all the birthday greetings yesterday. It was a treat hearing from so many far and wide.

Have a healthy and happy day,

Peg

Bridis Promoted to Senior Lecturer

[Ted Bridis](#) - The University of Florida promoted former AP Washington investigative editor Ted Bridis, 55, to senior lecturer as a member of its full-time faculty in the College of Journalism and Communications, effective July 1.

The promotion, based on evaluations by administrators, peers and students over 11 semesters and a review of his work and undergraduate courses he has developed by nationally renowned faculty at journalism schools across the country, came just under five years after Bridis retired from AP in Washington to move back to his home state of Florida to teach college journalism there. The senior lecturer title reflects "evidence of successful teaching and a distinguished record of achievement beyond a lecturer."

Bridis teaches advanced journalism courses in political and investigative reporting, Breaking News reporting and public records. He founded the Fresh Take Florida news service, where UF students cover state government, including the Legislature and other issues of statewide, regional or national interest, with their work published by nearly 100 news organizations across Florida, including AP. His former students are now working at the Washington Post, New York Times, Politico, Axios, Chicago Tribune, Miami Herald, Charlotte Observer, Orlando Sentinel, Palm Beach Post and the Marshall Project.

The Louisiana muzzler in robes

[Charlie Hanley](#) – Any reporter who has ever gotten a call from a county commissioner, a mayor, a governor's spokesman, an Army PAO, a U.S. Embassy flack or a White House press officer to complain, cajole or convince them to correct or clarify or cover something – any such reporter would recognize as absurd Tuesday's ruling by the Trump-appointed judge in Louisiana forbidding the federal government from speaking with social media platforms about issues of concern.

Seems we've gotten to a point where certain quarters feel they should be free to spread lies far and wide without being called out on it. Reminds me of a time I wrote to the publisher of an upcoming book by a guy known to be spreading lies about our AP reporting, and warned them they should closely fact-check their author. A major daily actually then reported that I was "trying to suppress publication of a new book."

To me, it was dialogue. To some, it seems, it was a crime against the First Amendment!

Such sensitivity. God forbid we ever see the day when our Tony Faucis and CDC experts and election officials are muzzled as our health and our democratic system hang in the balance.

Connecting Sky Shots



Charles Monzella - July 4 sunset photo from Truro, in the northern section of Cape Cod.



James Reindl - Sunrise in Bangkok on June 30.

Stories of Interest

MediaNews Group Ends Online Comments

By SARA FISCHER
Axios

MediaNews Group, the local newspaper company owned by Alden Global Capital, has shut down all of its comment sections as of July 1st, due to difficulties in moderating them, executives told Axios.

Why it matters: Comments were a staple of early internet blogging, but professional news websites have reeled them in to prevent spam, abuse and harassment.

Catch up quick: MediaNews Group, also known as Digital First Media, is home to hundreds of weekly newspapers and dozens of daily newspapers, including major regional outlets such as The Denver Post and Boston Herald. Read more [here](#).

There's Already a Solution to the Crisis of Local News

By STEVEN WALDMAN
For Politico

(Steven Waldman, a longtime journalist, is co-founder of Report For America. He is currently president of Rebuild Local News Coalition, a group dedicated to advancing First Amendment-friendly public policies to help save local news.)

Those concerned that government support for the news media would violate the First Amendment might consider the views of one expert on the topic, James Madison.

In the early years of the republic, two camps had formed over the question of how much publishers should pay in postage to have their newspapers lugged around the country by horses. One group wanted publishers to pay some postage to partly cover the costs. Madison was more radical. He believed newspapers should be mailed for free. To charge anything would be a “tax on newspapers” — which, he wrote to Thomas Jefferson, would be “an insidious forerunner to something worse.”

Jefferson agreed.

It's notable that even the voices that countered Madison and Jefferson (and ultimately prevailed) wanted a massive subsidy. Indeed, the postal subsidy played an important role in standing up our free press. Given the sudden interest in public policy to support community media — bills to help local news are popping up in both Congress and in state legislatures around the country — it's worth revisiting and truly understanding the significant government intervention in newspapers that began in the founding era and continued until the mid-20th century.

The nation's founders worried how a representative government could work over such a big land mass. How would lawmakers truly understand public opinion? "The larger a country, the less easy for its real opinion to be ascertained, and the less difficult to be counterfeited," Madison explained in a major newspaper of the time. "The more extensive a country, the more insignificant is each individual in his own eyes. This may be unfavorable to liberty."

But Madison had a solution: "Whatever facilitates a general intercourse of sentiments, as good roads, domestic commerce, a free press, and particularly a circulation of newspapers through the entire body of the people, and Representatives going from, and returning among every part of them, is equivalent to a contraction of territorial limits, and is favorable to liberty." Read more [here](#).

Shared By Len Iwanski

Opinions of Interest

Threads Review: Twitter Without the Rough Edges or News

By JIM WATERSON
Media Editor
The Guardian

Imagine a social network where users have invested so much social capital in putting up data about themselves that it is impossible to imagine them leaving. Moving to a new site would be an enormous risk for users because you would lose your network of friends. The network's entire existence, the theory goes, is secured by these barriers to starting afresh at a new outlet.

This was how the Guardian described Myspace in 2007, when the early social network had 150 million global users, a number so large it was considered improbable that they would ever move elsewhere. (In the end Myspace was soon overtaken by Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook, Rupert Murdoch lost almost all the money he spent buying the site, and Myspace's once-ubiquitous founder Tom Anderson has travelled the world on the profits ever since.)

Sixteen years later, Elon Musk's Twitter is also testing the theory that people remain loyally addicted to their favoured social network until suddenly, one day, they give up and move elsewhere. This week Zuckerberg launched Threads, a new platform aimed

at winning over people who, in the words of one executive, want somewhere a bit like Twitter that is “sanely run”. Read more [here](#).

Biden’s DOJ Pressuring Journalists to Help Build Case Against Assange

By JAMES BALL
Rolling Stone

The Department of Justice and FBI are pressuring multiple British journalists to cooperate with the prosecution of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, using vague threats and pressure tactics in the process. I know because I am one of the British journalists being pressured to cooperate in the case against him, as someone who used to (briefly) work and live with him, and who went on to blow the whistle on WikiLeaks’ own ethical lapses.

Assange is facing extradition to the United States from the U.K., where he is currently in Belmarsh prison in south London, over charges related to dissemination of material leaked by Chelsea Manning and published by WikiLeaks and a coalition of five newspapers through 2010 and 2011. Read more [here](#).

Shared by Doug Pizac

GQ Removes Article After Complaints from Warner Bros. Discovery CEO

By TOM JONES
Poynter

Something unusual, very unusual, happened in the journalism world this week.

Here’s the breakdown:

On Monday, GQ published an analysis piece about David Zaslav, the CEO of Warner Bros. Discovery. It was far from flattering. The story compared Zaslav to Richard Gere’s character in “Pretty Woman,” as well as the Logan Roy character in HBO’s “Succession.” The story said, “In a relatively short period of time, David Zaslav has become perhaps the most hated man in Hollywood.”

Then Zaslav’s camp complained to GQ about the analysis. That led to extensive edits to the story.

When the writer saw the edits, he asked GQ to remove his byline.

Now here’s the very unusual part: GQ then took the piece down entirely.

That's everything we do know.

There's plenty we don't know, including the key question in all of this: Did GQ buckle to complaints from the powerful Zaslav by removing the story from its website?

The whole thing sounds bungled from the start. Read more [here](#).

Connecting Wishes Happy Birthday



[Jeannine Yeomans](#)

On Saturday to...

[Norm Clarke](#)

[Carol Robinson](#)

On Sunday to...

[Bruce Richardson](#)

[Paul Simon](#)

Today in History - July 7, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, July 7, the 188th day of 2023. There are 177 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 7, 1976, the United States Military Academy at West Point included female cadets for the first time as 119 women joined the Class of 1980.

On this date:

In 1846, U.S. annexation of California was proclaimed at Monterey after the surrender of a Mexican garrison.

In 1865, four people were hanged in Washington, D.C. for conspiring with John Wilkes Booth to assassinate President Abraham Lincoln: Lewis Powell, David Herold, George Atzerodt and Mary Surratt, the first woman to be executed by the federal government.

In 1898, the United States annexed Hawaii.

In 1930, construction began on Boulder Dam (later Hoover Dam).

In 1946, Jimmy Carter, 21, married Rosalynn Smith, 18, in Plains, Georgia.

In 1948, six female U.S. Navy reservists became the first women to be sworn in to the regular Navy.

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan announced he was nominating Arizona Judge Sandra Day O'Connor to become the first female justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1990, the first "Three Tenors" concert took place as opera stars Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo and Jose Carreras performed amid the brick ruins of Rome's Baths of Caracalla on the eve of the World Cup championship.

In 2005, terrorist bombings in three Underground stations and a double-decker bus killed 52 victims and four bombers in the worst attack on London since World War II.

In 2010, Los Angeles police charged Lonnie Franklin Jr. in the city's "Grim Sleeper" serial killings. (Franklin, who was sentenced to death for the killings of nine women and a teenage girl, died in prison in March 2020 at the age of 67.)

In 2016, Micah Johnson, a Black Army veteran who served in Afghanistan, opened fire on Dallas police, killing five officers in an act of vengeance for the fatal police shootings of Black men; the attack ended with Johnson being killed by a bomb delivered by a police robot.

Ten years ago: A de Havilland DHC-3 Otter air taxi crashed after taking off from Soldotna, Alaska, killing all 10 people on board. Andy Murray became the first British man in 77 years to win the Wimbledon title, beating Novak Djokovic 6-4, 7-5, 6-4 in the final.

Five years ago: After two days of talks in North Korea's capital, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said he had commitments for new discussions on denuclearization, but North Korea said Pompeo's visit had been "regrettable" and that the United States was making "gangster-like" demands. High electricity demand amid a California heat wave left tens of thousands without power in Los Angeles.

One year ago: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced his resignation after droves of top government officials quit over the latest scandal to engulf him, marking an end to three tumultuous years in which he tried to bluster his way through one ethical lapse after another. A federal judge sentenced Derek Chauvin to 21 years in prison for violating George Floyd's civil rights, telling the former Minneapolis police officer that what he did was "simply wrong" and "offensive." James Caan, the curly-haired tough guy known to movie fans as the hotheaded Sonny Corleone of "The Godfather" and to television audiences as the dying football player in the classic weeper "Brian's Song," died at age 82.

Today's Birthdays: Musician-conductor Doc Severinsen is 96. Rock star Ringo Starr is 83. Comedian Bill Oddie is 82. Singer-guitarist Warren Entner of the Grass Roots is 80. Actor Joe Spano is 77. Pop singer David Hodo (The Village People) is 76. Country singer Linda Williams is 76. Actor Shelley Duvall is 74. Actor Roz Ryan is 72. Actor Billy Campbell is 64. Rock musician Mark White (Spin Doctors) is 61. Singer-songwriter Vonda Shepard is 60. Actor-comedian Jim Gaffigan is 57. R&B musician Ricky Kinchen (Mint Condition) is 57. Actor Amy Carlson is 55. Actor Jorja Fox is 55. Actor Cree Summer is 54. Actor Robin Weigert is 54. Actor Kirsten Vangsness is 51. Actor Troy Garity is 50. Actor Berenice Bejo is 47. Actor Hamish Linklater is 47. Olympic silver and bronze medal figure skater Michelle Kwan is 43. Rapper Cassidy is 41. Country singer Gabbie Nolen is 41. Actor Ross Malinger is 39. Actor-comedian Luke Null (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 33. Pop singer Ally Hernandez (Fifth Harmony) (TV: "The X Factor") is 30. Pop musician Ashton Irwin (5 Seconds to Summer) is 29. Country singer Maddie Font (Maddie and Tae) is 28.

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.

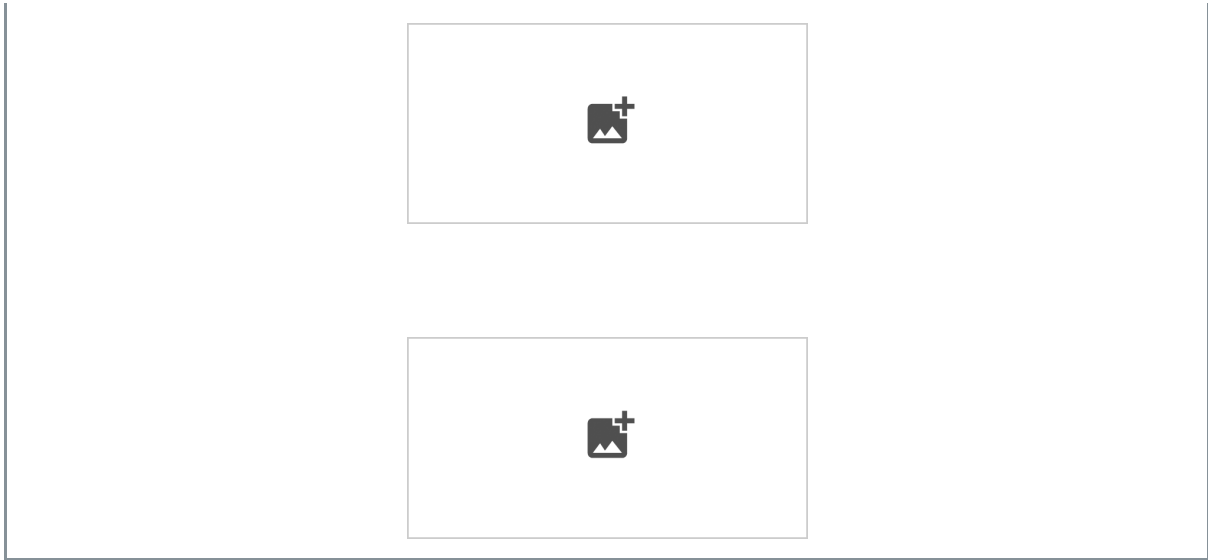
Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

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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