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Connecting

July 10, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this July 10, 2023,

Today's Connecting brings sad news of the death of **Fred S. Hoffman**, longtime Pentagon reporter in the Washington bureau, Pentagon spokesman and the AP's oldest retiree at 100 years and six months of age.

His daughter [Lisa Hoffman](#) shared the news late Sunday of her father's death on June 24 at his home in Alexandria, Va., and shared his obituary story. "He was at peace and ready to go," Lisa said.

"Fred was a pillar," said **Lou Boccardi**, former AP president and CEO.

"He was a giant among Pentagon reporters. Truly a legend," said **Robert Burns**, retired AP National Security writer.

If you have a favorite memory of working with Fred, please send it along.

EMAILS TO POLLY ANDERSON: As noted in Thursday's Connecting, former NY General Desker Polly Anderson celebrated her birthday July 7 and would welcome hearing from her colleagues. If you'd like to send her an email, you can do so through her sister Sara Anderson Hassan - sea1955@gmail.com You could also send a card to: Polly Anderson, c/o Arden Courts, Promedica Memory Care Community, 13800 Bon Secours Dr., Midlothian, VA 23114.

GO FUND ME FOR KELLY WIESE NIEMEYER AND FAMILY: Our colleague Betsy Taylor shares the following:

Former AP reporter **Kelly Wiese Niemeyer** and her family are unable to live in their home after a severe storm on Saturday, July 1. A tree fell on their home and garage in the St. Louis area. Kelly, her husband Jeff, and their two children were uninjured, but the Niemeysers could use some short-term support as they already know their insurance will not cover all their expenses. Kelly Wiese worked for the AP from 1999 until 2007, and is known for her time covering the Missouri Statehouse. She is currently a senior news editor at Washington University. Please keep her family in your thoughts, and if you're able to contribute to help with immediate needs, a GoFundMe has been established. Click [here](#) to access.

My thanks to friend and colleague **Peg Coughlin** for handling Connecting editor duties late last week during our visit to the Bay Area - a great trip even though our boat tour to find orca whales was cancelled by high winds and waves. A beautiful area and a great family gathering.

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

Paul

-30-
FRED S. HOFFMAN
1922-2023



Photo by Chris Connell

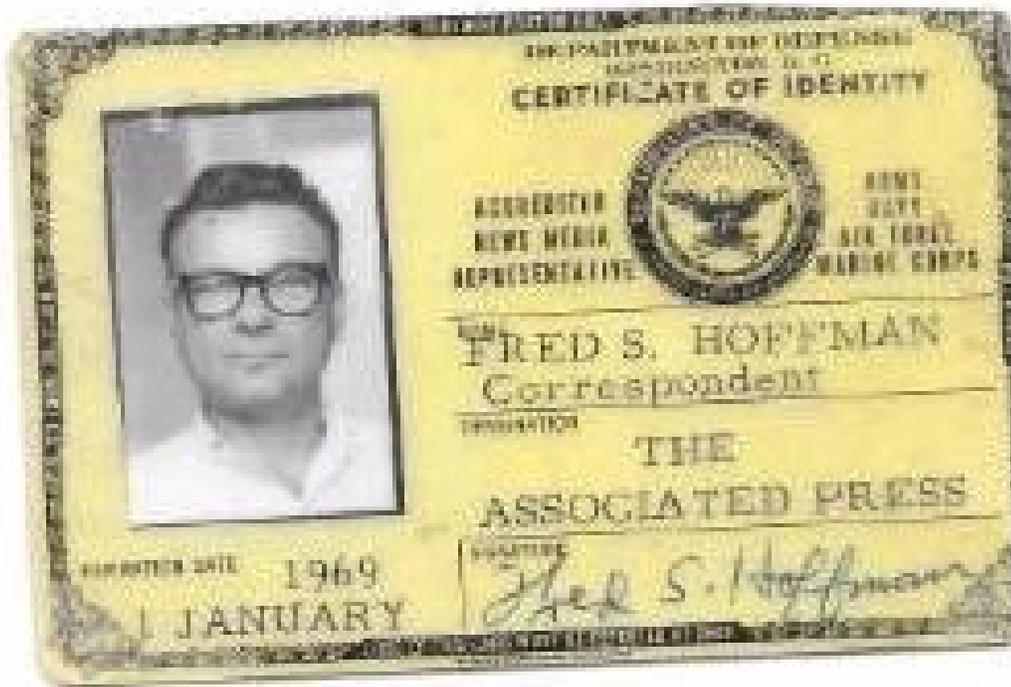
Fred S. Hoffman, a legendary Associated Press reporter and former Pentagon spokesman, died of melanoma at home in Alexandria, Va., on June 24, 2023. He was 100 years old plus six months.

An irascible, straight-shooting soul, Fred always marveled at his lifelong good luck and left at peace, with no regrets.

With unerring good judgment and smart choices, Fred set his standards high and met them. He made his own path and hewed to it, a man supremely comfortable in his own skin.

Fred began his nearly 40-year news career as a Boston radio reporter covering boxing matches from the front row, dodging flying droplets of blood.

Thirty-six of those years were as an AP reporter, where he chronicled seven administrations; the Vietnam War from start to end; the Cuban Missile Crisis from Guantanamo; and the Mercury 7 space flights from Cape Canaveral.

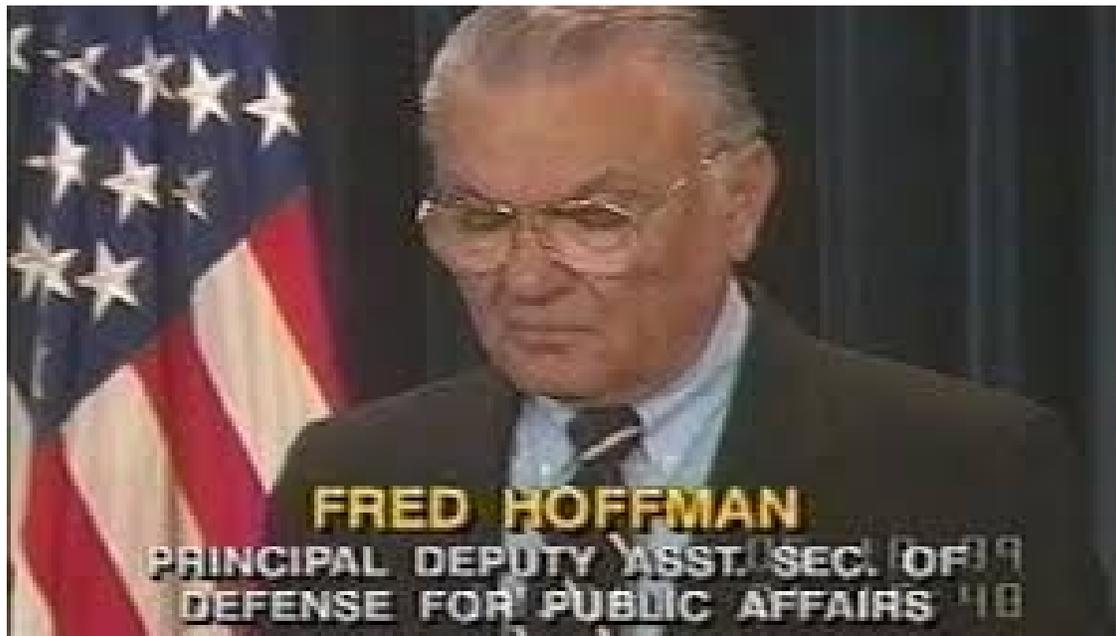


To this day, he is considered one of the toughest, most enterprising, ethical and tireless reporters to have ever covered the Pentagon, his beat for nearly 24 years.

Bill Greener, deputy press secretary to President Gerald Ford during the high-tension 1975 Mayaguez incident, recalled that Fred filed his story on the seizing of the ship “faster than we could get the information to the president of the United States.” And Fred got the story right.

Along with AP’s Hugh Mulligan, Fred was named a Pulitzer Prize finalist for their investigation of the black market in Vietnam. Among his other awards were commendations from the Overseas Press Club; the National Headliners Club; the VFW’s first Gold Medal for national security reporting; and the Department of Defense medal for Distinguished Public Service.

At 61, Fred entered public service, becoming Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. He served as chief spokesman and a policy adviser to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger for four years.



After Pentagon foul-ups prevented the press from covering the start of the 1989 US invasion of Panama to remove dictator Noriega, Fred spearheaded reforms of the press pool system to ensure journalists could reach the front lines fast in future conflicts.

Fred's own story began on Dec. 26, 1922, in Dorchester, Mass. His mother, Rachel Gold, had fled antisemitic pogroms in Poland, arriving in America alone in steerage at 13, with her mother's Sabbath candlesticks and little else in her carpet bag. His father, Louis, an artist and dreamer at heart, made a living as a paper hanger.

Until World War II interrupted, Fred studied journalism for three years at Boston University but never graduated. To pay the \$300 yearly tuition, he worked as a shoe salesman, restaurant bus boy, ice-cream vendor and mental hospital janitor. He served as a WWII Army reservist until medically discharged under protest.

It was in Boston where Fred's greatest good fortune began, when Norma Simons flirted with him across a city street. In time, she turned down an invitation to dance on Broadway - recruited by Ethel Merman - to follow him to Washington, D.C., where he was hired as a radio reporter and editor. So began a 72-year marriage, an epic of undimmed devotion. Norma, his bashert, died in 2017.

From that union came adored daughter Lisa Hoffman, herself a three-decade news reporter and editor, who shared Fred's joy at the privilege of witnessing history be made.

When off-duty, Fred fed his passion for Civil War and other history, hiked the entire 185-mile C&O canal twice, traveled to 25 countries, and was happiest on a deserted beach at sunset with Norma and their beloved dog, Creech.

In his last days, though nearly blinded by macular degeneration, Fred was riveted by news of the war in Ukraine and the Trump investigations, fascinated by more history unfolding before him.

He also had the privilege to thank a parade of loved ones and friends for sharing his life. To those he missed -- especially all he growled at or worse -- please know he wished you fair winds and following seas.

Roger and out, Fred. We have the watch.

Survivors include daughter, Lisa Hoffman; step-grandchildren Aida and Mirza Dedajic; nieces Lori Frank and Robin Kesslen; nephews Gene and Monte Kroner; grandnephew and -nieces Joshua Frank; Alexis and Lindsay Kesslen; Bailey Kroner; Rachel Hanselman; "Chosen" kin Greg Martin (Fred's surrogate son), Laura Zabriskie, Carolyn Gamble, and the Gastrell family; his Huntley Meadows Park and Lodestone Court families; and caregiver NaNa Darkwah. His brother, Morris Hoffman, died in 1928 and sister, Doris Kroner, in 2003.

Instead of flowers, those so moved may consider a contribution to Friends of Huntley Meadows Park, <http://www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org/> for the Norma Hoffman Fund, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Alexandria, Va. 22306; American Jewish Congress, ajcongress.org; or a charity of your choice.

Inurnment will occur at a later date at Arlington National Cemetery. Online condolences may be shared at www.demainefuneralhome.com and legacy.com.

(Written and shared by Lisa Hoffman - lisahoffman.editor@gmail.com)

Overwhelmed, moved by flattering comments

[Adolphe Bernotas](#) - Guild leaders know that complaints come aplenty, compliments few -- a corollary among union activists: "The company screws them, but they blame the union."

Not this time.

The comments on my retiring from Guild leadership have been overwhelmingly and movingly flattering, an embarrassment of praise, including at the annual CWA and TNG sessions taking place this and last week in St. Louis. Thank you sisters, brothers and colleagues!

Thanks Nancy Shulins, pride of Stevens High School (aciu sirdingai) for bilingual greetings; Marc Humbert (calls me cheerleader and protector); Bruce Richardson (tribute from the opposition); Larry Margasak (Guild brother in arms) David Tirrell-Wysocki (colleague in bureau and on the Concord Y aerobics floor); Norm Abelson, Lyle Price, Melissa Murphy, Will Lester and those who reached out on other public platforms and private messages.

Marguerite says she will save the accolades for the obit.

Ted Bridis promotion at Florida

[Edward L. Birk](#) - It was good to see the item in the July 7 Connecting about Ted Bridis's promotion to senior lecturer at the University of Florida. Ted's and my times at the AP did not overlap. I did, however, have occasion to retain Ted's services in 2020 as an expert witness in a public records lawsuit against a Florida sheriff. For two years, the sheriff refused to release jailhouse video of a disabled Army combat medic who died while in custody. The sheriff's strategy was to deny any malfeasance, all the while alleging that my newspaper client had a vendetta against the sheriff and law enforcement, and that his deputies had done nothing connected to the vet's death. The video showed otherwise. Ted's testimony bolstered our arguments to the court that the newspaper was engaged in routine, professional newsgathering under the First Amendment, and even if the newspaper had been engaged in a vendetta, it would have been irrelevant to Florida's public records laws. Here's a link to some of the newspaper's coverage: [11-13-20-Gregory Edwards Jail Video](#). Congratulations Ted.

BEST OF THE WEEK — FIRST WINNER

AP goes into overdrive, with honesty and sensitivity, to document a restive France



The Paris suburb of Nanterre was at the heart of violent protests after a French policeman killed a 17-year-old at a traffic stop, and AP journalists in Paris worked around the clock to document the unrest and its aftermath.

Photographer Christophe Ena was among the first on the scene, taking AP's first photos and video of flames in Nanterre on the first night and alerting our customers — and competitors — of the gravity of the story. He and a photographer from the

European Pressphoto Agency were the only international journalists on the scene at the time and worked together to ensure each other's safety as tensions rose around them.

Ena was joined on subsequent nights by freelance photographers Aurelien Morissard and Lewis Joly, all three of them heading into the heart of the unrest despite dangerous conditions.

Cara Anna, arriving from Nairobi, was among just a few journalists to cover the boy's funeral and discreetly filmed a brief video of the cemetery where people were gathering to mourn. It was the only footage published of the event, but also respected the organizers' request not to have cameras at the funeral itself.

And amid the crush of breaking news, chief correspondent John Leicester painstakingly collected names of towns targeted by violence and worked with interactives to produce an exclusive map showing how quickly the unrest had spread across France.

On a highly competitive story and facing other media with much greater resources, AP's coverage drew global attention. AP videos drew more than 11,000 hits over the first three days of rioting alone. The top videos used by AP customers over the weekend were all from France unrest. Over the course of several days, stories about the violence were among AP's top five most-used text stories, according to Newswhip and AP Newsroom.

Read more [here](#).

BEST OF THE WEEK — SECOND WINNER

AP journalists get exclusive access to California prison graduation as grant program about to expand



With the federal Pell Grant program that helps incarcerated people get college degrees about to expand, writer Aaron Morrison, video journalist Noreen Nasir and photojournalist Jae C. Hong obtained exclusive access to a prison graduation ceremony at Folsom State Prison in California.

Thousands of U.S. prisoners get degrees behind bars, mostly paid for by the federal Pell Grant program. In July, the program will expand to give 30,000 more students in prison about \$130 million in aid per year.

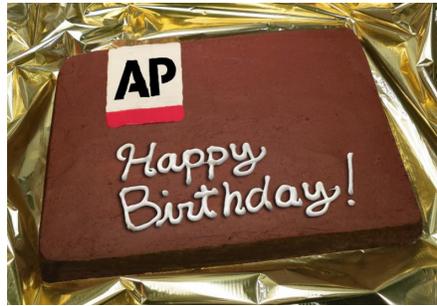
Morrison and Nasir, both from the Race and Ethnicity team and based in New York, witnessed more than 80 men marching in the first graduation ceremony held at Folsom in three years. Hong, based in Los Angeles, covered the celebration as well. The main character of the story was released after publication, so retired AP photographer Rich Pedroncelli covered his release while Morrison updated the text.

These journalists helped AP venture into the rare territory that is inside U.S. correctional facilities. Their sourcing and access continue to allow AP to examine prisoner conditions, highlight racial disparities and share stories from the people most impacted. The story has so far gotten 59,000 page views on AP digital platforms where it continues to get traffic, and Folsom State Prison officials said they are going to broadcast Nasir's video on the prison TV network, so the incarcerated men can see it.

For thorough and thoughtful reporting with rare access, this team earns Best of the Week — Second Winner.

Read more [here](#).

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Richard Keltner](#)

[Nancy Nussbaum](#)

Stories of interest

An Iowa meteorologist started talking about climate change on newscasts. Then came the harassment ^(AP)

BY HANNAH FINGERHUT, HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH AND SUMMER BALLENTINE

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The harassment started to intensify as TV meteorologist Chris Gloninger did more reporting on climate change during local newscasts — outraged emails and even a threat to show up at his house.

Gloninger said he had been recruited, in part, to “shake things up” at the Iowa station where he worked, but backlash was building. The man who sent him a series of threatening emails was charged with third-degree harassment. The Des Moines station asked him to dial back his coverage, facing what he called an understandable pressure to maintain ratings.

“I started just connecting the dots between extreme weather and climate change, and then the volume of pushback started to increase quite dramatically,” he said in an interview with The Associated Press.

So, on June 21, he announced that he was leaving KCCI-TV — and his 18-year career in broadcast journalism altogether.

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

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A Top U.K. Newspaper Explores Its Ties to Slavery, and Britain's (New York Times)

By David Segal

It is the kind of historical artifact that would be easy to miss: an old and fragile little book unearthed in the archives of the Derbyshire Record Office, in the East Midlands of England. The book, a commercial ledger from 1822, holds the names of enslavers who ran cotton plantations on islands along the coast of Florida, Georgia and South Carolina.

And on one of the browning pages, in elegant, handwritten script, someone has inked the name of the company buying that cotton: Shuttleworth, Taylor & Co.

Cassandra Goptar, a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Hull, knew that firm and had been hunting for any trace of it for five months. The Taylor in question was none other than John Edward Taylor, founder of The Manchester Guardian, now known simply as The Guardian, the most prominent progressive newspaper in Britain for more than two centuries.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Dennis Conrad, Sibby Christensen, Len Iwanski.

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Petition seeks to deny renewal of Fox 29's broadcast license (Philadelphia Inquirer)

by Nick Vadala

The Media and Democracy Project has petitioned the FCC to deny Fox 29's broadcast license renewal, saying Fox violated FCC policy.

The petition alleges that Fox Corporation, Fox 29's parent company, broadcast "knowingly false narratives" during the 2020 election — "a good deal" of which was rebroadcast in Philly.

Such petitions are rare, and often not successful.

A media-focused public interest group is challenging the renewal of Fox 29's broadcast license in a bid to hold the station's parent company, the Fox Corp., accountable for reporting broadcast on Fox News Channel during the 2020 election.

In a petition filed this week, the Media and Democracy Project alleges that Fox broadcast "knowingly false narratives about the 2020 election" on the Fox News Channel, a cable station. A "good deal of that narrative" was rebroadcast on Fox 29, as well as other local Fox stations, the petition says.

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

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If Threads is the final nail in Twitter's coffin, where will the journalists and politicians go? (Guardian)

John Naughton

Watching Elon Musk destroying Twitter has the same creepy fascination that one experienced during the 44 days in 2022 when Liz Truss and Kwasi Kwarteng were busily employed tanking the British economy. There was, however, one important difference between the two spectacles: Musk actually owns Twitter, whereas Truss and Kwarteng were merely the temporary custodians of the national economy.

With Twitter, the wrecking process started even before Musk owned the company. Having offered to buy it for \$44bn (arguably at least twice what it was worth), he then tried to get out of the deal, but was compelled to go through with it. Once installed as the owner, he fired half the staff, including many of the people who understood how its technical infrastructure worked and others who had a good understanding of the complexities of running a social media company in today's polarised world. He embarked on arbitrary and contradictory decision-making on the hoof, one moment announcing new rules, the next minute abandoning them.

He invited Donald Trump back on to the platform that had won him the Republican nomination – and was rebuffed: Trump doesn't ever want to be under an obligation to anyone, save perhaps Vladimir Putin. And so he remained on his own platform – Truth Social. Musk insulted advertisers that are the prime source of Twitter's revenues, and that were concerned about seeing their brands' messages appearing alongside the ravings of the political extremists and sundry fanatics whom Musk also allowed back on to the service. And when some advertisers expressed their doubts online, they were rewarded with a poo emoji as a reply.

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

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The BBC suspends presenter over claims he paid a teenager for explicit photos (AP)

BY JILL LAWLESS

LONDON (AP) — The BBC said Sunday that it has suspended a leading presenter who is alleged to have paid a teenager for sexually explicit photos.

As senior British politicians urged a rapid investigation, the broadcaster said it was working to establish the facts of "a complex and fast-moving set of circumstances."

The U.K.'s publicly funded national broadcaster was scrambling to head off a worsening crisis after The Sun newspaper reported allegations that the male presenter gave a youth 35,000 pounds (\$45,000) starting in 2020 when the young person was 17.

Neither the star nor the youth was identified. Amid speculation on social media about the identity of the presenter, several of the BBC's best-known stars spoke up to say it wasn't them.

Though the age of sexual consent in Britain is 16, it's a crime to make or possess indecent images of anyone under 18.

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

The Final Word

How Milwaukee Is Celebrating the Typewriter's Long, Local History (Atlas Obscura)



A Tom Hanks autographed typewriter (far left) was on display at Milwaukee's inaugural QWERTYFEST MKE. The festival celebrates the beloved machine, which was invented in Milwaukee in 1873. JASON HILLMAN/COURTESY QWERTYFEST MKE

By JENNIFER BYRNE

THE MILWAUKEE FOLK PUNK BAND Nineteen Thirteen has showcased the talents of various musicians over the years, from cellist Janet Schiff to drummer Victor DeLorenzo, a founding member of the chart-topping, Milwaukee-based Violent Femmes. Recently, though, the band featured a guest musician playing a lesser-known instrument—the typewriter.

“This was my first time playing the typewriter as a musical instrument, but hopefully not the last,” says poet Monica Thomas, who provided backup to Renee Bebeau’s percussion while typing a local news story on a vintage Remington, made in—you guessed it—1913. “I heard there’s a group in Madison organizing a typewriter orchestra, so there’s hope for next year.”

If you’ve never heard of a typewriter orchestra, that’s probably just the tip of the substantial iceberg of information you’re lacking about this intriguing machine. Another little-known fact about the typewriter: like the Violent Femmes, Harley-Davidson motorcycles, and TV’s Arthur Fonzarelli, the typewriter was born in Milwaukee. And for the first time, the city has composed the ultimate love letter to the typewriter in the form of a weekend-long 150th birthday celebration complete with Thomas’s typewriter musical talents.

“[The typewriter] is such a cool thing about Milwaukee, and I don’t think a lot of people know that” it was invented here, says Tea Krulos, an author, journalist, and co-organizer of QWERTYFEST MKE. “It hasn’t really been celebrated here at all.”

Read more [here](#). Shared by Tim Marsh.

Today in History - July 10, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, July 10, the 191st day of 2023. There are 174 days left in the year.

Today's highlight

On July 10, 1940, during World War II, the Battle of Britain began as the Luftwaffe started attacking southern England. (The Royal Air Force was ultimately victorious.)

On this date

In 1509, theologian John Calvin, a key figure of the Protestant Reformation, was born in Noyon, Picardy, France.

In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson personally delivered the Treaty of Versailles to the Senate and urged its ratification. (However, the Senate rejected it.)

In 1925, jury selection took place in Dayton, Tennessee, in the trial of John T. Scopes, charged with violating the law by teaching Darwin's Theory of Evolution. (Scopes was convicted and fined, but the verdict was overturned on a technicality.)

In 1929, American paper currency was reduced in size as the government began issuing bills that were approximately 25 percent smaller.

In 1951, armistice talks aimed at ending the Korean War began at Kaesong.

In 1985, the Greenpeace protest ship Rainbow Warrior was sunk with explosives in Auckland, New Zealand, by French intelligence agents; one activist was killed.

In 1991, Boris N. Yeltsin took the oath of office as the first elected president of the Russian republic. President George H.W. Bush lifted economic sanctions against South Africa.

In 2002, the House approved, 310-113, a measure to allow airline pilots to carry guns in the cockpit to defend their planes against terrorists (President George W. Bush later signed the measure into law).

In 2005, a search-and-rescue team found the body of a missing U.S. commando in eastern Afghanistan, bringing an end to the desperate search for the last member of an ill-fated, four-man special forces unit that had disappeared the previous month.

In 2015, to the cheers of thousands, South Carolina pulled the Confederate flag from its place of honor at the Statehouse after more than 50 years.

In 2020, President Donald Trump commuted the sentence of his longtime political confidant Roger Stone, intervening in extraordinary fashion in a criminal case that was central to the Russia investigation and concerned Trump's own conduct; the move came days before Stone was to begin serving a 40-month sentence for lying to Congress, witness tampering and obstructing the House investigation into whether Trump's 2016 campaign had colluded with Russia.

Ten years ago: Dzhokhar Tsarnaev pleaded not guilty in the Boston Marathon bombing in a seven-minute proceeding that marked his first appearance in public since his capture in mid-April 2013. In a first, the Navy succeeded in landing a drone the size of a fighter jet aboard an aircraft carrier, the USS George H.W. Bush, off the Virginia coast. David Ortiz doubled in his first at-bat to become baseball's career leader in hits as a designated hitter and hit a two-run homer an inning later, leading the Boston Red Sox to an 11-4 victory over Seattle.

Five years ago: A daring rescue mission in Thailand was completed successfully, as the last four of the 12 boys who were trapped in a flooded cave for more than two weeks were brought to safety along with their soccer coach. The other eight had been

brought out in the two preceding days. Rancher Dwight Hammond and his son Steven, who had been convicted of intentionally setting fires on public land in Oregon, were pardoned by President Donald Trump.

One year ago: Japan's governing party and its coalition partner scored a major victory in a parliamentary election, possibly propelled by sympathy votes in the wake of the assassination two days earlier of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Sri Lanka's opposition political parties met to install a new government a day after the president and prime minister offered to resign in the most dramatic day of monthslong political turmoil. Dozens of Ukrainian emergency workers labored to pull people out of the rubble after a Russian rocket attack smashed into apartment buildings in eastern Ukraine, killing at least 15 people.

Today's Birthdays: Actor William Smithers is 96. Actor Lawrence Pressman is 84. Singer Mavis Staples is 84. Actor Mills Watson is 83. Actor Robert Pine is 82. Rock musician Jerry Miller (Moby Grape) is 80. International Tennis Hall of Famer Virginia Wade is 78. Folk singer Arlo Guthrie is 76. Rock musician Dave Smalley is 74. Country-folk singer-songwriter Cheryl Wheeler is 72. Rock singer Neil Tennant (Pet Shop Boys) is 69. Banjo player Bela Fleck is 65. Actor Fiona Shaw is 65. Bluegrass singer-musician Tim Surrent (Balsam Range) is 60. Actor Alec Mapa is 58. Country singer-songwriter Ken Mellons is 58. Rock musician Peter DiStefano (Porno for Pyros) is 58. Actor Gale Harold is 54. Country singer Gary LeVox (Rascal Flatts) is 53. Actor Aaron D. Spears is 52. Actor Sofia Vergara is 51. Rockabilly singer Imelda May is 49. Actor Adrian Grenier is 47. Actor Chiwetel Ejiofor is 46. Actor Gwendoline Yeo is 46. Actor Thomas Ian Nicholas is 43. Singer-actor Jessica Simpson is 43. Actor Heather Hemmens is 39. Actor Emily Skeggs (TV: "When We Rise") is 33. Rapper/singer Angel Haze is 32. Pop singer Perrie Edwards (Little Mix) is 30.

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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