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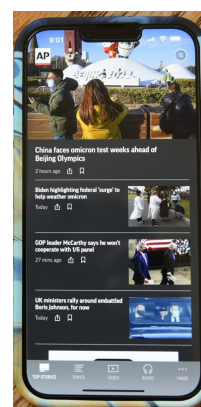
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Connecting

Aug. 2, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this Aug. 2, 2023,

Please join me in wishing our colleague **Francesca Pitaro** all the best in her plans to retire in September from the Corporate Archives department of The Associated Press.

But please say it isn't so, **Valerie Komor**, who announced this news Tuesday.

While I am happy for Francesca in the new life's chapters that await her and her family, she will be SO missed. In my MVP list of those who contribute to the production of Connecting, Francesca would be among those at the very top. Corporate Archives, which is headed by Valerie, has been invaluable to this newsletter since the outset.

Francesca and Valerie have been my go-to persons at virtually any time I make a request, including nights and weekends. Always with a virtual smile. And what they do benefits us all.

PRAISE FOR PETER ARNETT: [Hank Ackerman](#) – “What a remarkable story by Peter Arnett (in Tuesday’s Connecting). I missed the series in 1979 (as we didn’t see the special reports in Venezuela) but certainly, as other AP folk in other lands, saw refugees on the margins of every country. Peter’s stories and Eddie Adams’ photos still have vibrance as the refugee situation is so, so much greater today. Thanks for bringing it around.”

NEW 80’S CLUB MEMBER: The monthly listing of Connecting’s 90s/80s Club includes a new member since it was published in early July. **Dave Briscoe** is a newly minted 80s guy and provides us a wonderful essay about his life’s milestone.

TRUMP INDICTMENT: Click [here](#) to view today’s front pages of this historic event.

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

Paul

AP archivist Francesca Pitaro to retire in September



Francesca Pitaro - 2015 photo, by Santos Chaparro

[Valerie Komor](#) – As many of you may know, Francesca Pitaro has announced her retirement as of Sept. 22, 2023.

The Corporate Archives will go on, but we won't be the same!

Francesca arrived at AP in 2008, working part-time but becoming full-time not long after. She brought with her years of valuable hands-on experience in a variety of archival collections, including the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan, the Foundation Center, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, and the Port Washington Public Library. She embodies the gold standard for any

archivist: dedicated, always learning, detail-oriented yet efficient, warmly collegial, and self-assured. Smart goes without saying. But since she is Francesca, she is also gracious and kind.

And she brings those qualities to her work with researchers because reference is a service. Her intimate familiarity with our collections means she has been able to offer meaningful research assistance—she knows which boxes and folders to pull, she knows what information may NOT be available here but where to seek it, and she takes great personal interest in the research projects she supports. It was her timely processing of the Kent Cooper Papers that allowed Gene Allen to consult them over several summers, resulting in the first and only biography of AP's visionary general manager, Mr. Associated Press: Kent Cooper and the World of 20th Century News, published this past June.

But she has also been of value to the wider AP—in her monthly History Notes for Inside AP that draw attention to the archival collections, in her inventive photo blogs for AP Images, and in the support she has given to retired Vice President Paul Stevens and the daily Connecting newsletter. The Connecting community is the reincarnation (and expansion) of the AP alumni group that used to reunite every year at AP headquarters and visit us in the archives. It was really a family reunion, which Paul has reassembled virtually, with the help of Francesca, his secret weapon!

You might say that all her years of service here have earned Francesca advanced degrees in marketing and corporate communications alongside an honorary doctorate in Archival Enterprise.

I need not add that her cooking is legendary.

A date will be set for a celebratory send-off, but meantime, please join me in wishing our friend all the very best.

Francesca's email – fpitaro@ap.org

More on AP's Wilfrid Playfair

Wilfred Playfair, Who Covered Sacco-Vanzetti Deaths, Dies

Brookline, Mass., Sept. 10 (AP)—Wilfred E. Playfair, who as an editor in the Boston bureau of the Associated Press was the only newspaperman to attend the executions of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927, died yesterday at his home. He was 71. Playfair, a newspaperman in the United States and Canada for a half century until his retirement last January, also was one of four newsmen who notified Vice President Calvin Coolidge in 1923 he had become President through the death of President Harding. Playfair then attended the candlelight inauguration of the new President in Plymouth, Vt.

Playfair covered the famed Sacco-Vanzetti case almost from the start and was named as the only newsman to witness the execution of the two men con-

trial of the murder of a shoe factory paymaster in 1920.

Another highlight of his long career came at the outbreak of World War I when, as a reporter for the Montreal Star, he was the first newspaperman to arrive in Halifax, N. S., after the city was set afire by an ammunition ship explosion.

A native of Playfair, a small Ontario community named for his grandfather, Playfair entered the newspaper business as a young man with the Montreal Herald.

EASTERN DIVISION

Plymouth, Vt., is almost forgotten now, but for a time last March the eyes of America were turned toward the little hamlet in the Green Mountains where the President's father lay dying.

W. E. Playfair of the Boston bureau, the man who told the world the night the President first took his oath of office in that same farmhouse in which his father died, was there for THE ASSOCIATED PRESS. So was Jim Johnson, Boston operator, who slept, now and then, under horse blankets on a cot beside the marble topped table upon which his telegraph instrument rested. Both went without sleep for long hours at a stretch in order that no development in the condition of Col. Coolidge would be uncovered.

Playfair went to Plymouth on the night that Col. Coolidge took his last turn for the worse. The telegraph wire was waiting when the A. P. men arrived after plowing through the snow from Ludlow.

Those who read Playfair's stories from Plymouth also learned that even in a village housing six families there are other stories to be written. Scarcely a person in the village was not pictured to the rest of the world through THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

On the night that Colonel Coolidge died THE ASSOCIATED PRESS was ahead of all opposition with the flash.



W. E. PLAYFAIR

Francesca Pitaro – Wilfrid E. Playfair (1882-1953) had a short career at the AP, joining in Boston in 1921 and resigning in 1928. Before he left the AP he covered the death of President Coolidge's father, Colonel Coolidge, in 1926, which apparently involved long hours and dangerous drives on snowy roads. Perhaps his most memorable story was the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927. Playfair had covered the story almost since the beginning and he was the only reporter allowed at their execution in 1927. After leaving the AP, Playfair worked at the Boston Transcript and the Boston Herald.

From 8 to 80



David Briscoe in photo taken by daughter Maya Terhune with his birthday cake.

David Briscoe – on his 80th birthday, July 30 - Life can be too long not to enjoy it and too short to take it too seriously. But family is forever.

The culture into which I was born exactly 80 years ago sets the age of accountability at 8. Whether a curse or a blessing, I have always felt and quite often performed younger than my age.

At 8, when I was baptized a member of the then-Mormon church and told I would forevermore be accountable for all my actions, I definitely wasn't ready. So much have I never and never will confess. So much have I neglected and never will accomplish. So much have I never and never will learn.

At 18, I was a medium bright high school grad starting a 5-year trek through college that ended without a degree but a Peace Corps teaching job in the Philippines.

At 28, I was married to my lifelong Asian soulmate and starting a career with the world's largest news gathering organization in Manila and then back to raise four kids in Utah.

At 38, we had taken our family back to Manila for The AP to chronicle the last years of the first Marcos regime. (Four decades later, we're in the second.)

At 48, I was still an AP foreign correspondent, but based in Washington, D.C.

At 58, I was halfway back to Asia, reporting on AP's largest U.S. domain — Hawaii and the widely spread U.S. territories in the Pacific.

At 68 and 78, I was living a dream retirement in Hawaii ... and still am.

At 80, the years are flying fast, but I am still a Mormon with a journalist's heart and head. The church no longer calls itself by that name and both it and The AP have evolved to the point I'm not sure I could find a place in either.

But in family, I am content.

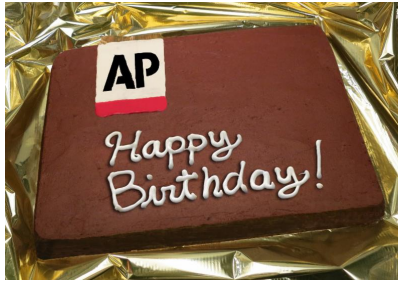
At 80, I feel little different from the 8 year old baptized in the historic Mormon Tabernacle or the journalist who retired 14 years ago. My father and mother and European immigrant grandfather are still in my dreams, as are the beautiful people of the Philippines whose blood flows in my wife and four wonderful children and their children and I expect will flow for generations to come.

My chosen profession was teaching, but it was journalism that captured my soul — a lifelong pursuit of truth beyond the claims of prophets, seers and revelators. How much I have found or will yet find remains to be seen.

For my 80th birthday at home on a Pacific island, my children forced me back into the role of journalist, asking questions via an international Webex chat of each of my offspring and their spouses and children. All responded masterfully. Noree and I have birthed connections to brilliance that keeps light in our lives.

Miles to go and so much to say and ask before I sleep, but it's been a modest and great 80th birthday, and I thank all those friends around the world who have marked it with warm and welcome greetings.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Dave Berry](#)

[Doug Rowe](#)

Connecting '80s/'90s Club

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Connecting publishes this list at the beginning of each month. If you are qualified for one of the age groups and would like to be listed, drop me a note. Please let me know of any errors.)

90s:

Norm Abelson
Malcolm Barr
Henry Bradsher
Hal Buell
Joseph Carter
Albert Habhab
George Hanna
Hoyt Harwell
Gene Herrick
Gene Lahammer
Joe McGowan
Charlie Monzella
Bob Petsche
Arlon Southall
Lou Uchitelle
Sal Veder

Doris Webster
Joe Young
Arnold Zeitlin

80s:

Hank Ackerman
Paul Albright
Rachel Ambrose
Peter Arnett
Harry Atkins
Frank Aukofer
Jim Bagby
Myron Belkind
Ed Bell
Dan Berger
Adolphe Bernotas
Brian Bland
Lou Boccardi
Hal Bock
William Roy Bolch Jr.
Ed Breen
David Briscoe
Ben Brown
Charles Bruce
Ford Burkhart
Harry Cabluck
Sibby Christensen
Shirley Christian
Norm Clarke
Steve Crowley
Don Dashiell
Bob Daugherty
Mike Doan
Bob Dobkin

Otto Doelling
Phil Dopoulos
John Eagan
Claude Erbsen
Mike Feinsilber
Dodi Fromson
Joe Galu
Bill Gillen
Steve Graham
Bob Greene
Jerry Harkavy
Paul Harrington
Mike Harris
Chick Harrity
Merrill Hartson
Monte Hayes
Jerry Jackson
Doug Kienitz
Dean Lee
Pierce Lehmbeck
Warren Lerude
Edie Lederer
Carl Leubsdorf
Jim Limbach
Bruce Lowitt
David Liu
Jim Luther
Larry Margasak
John Marlow
Dave Mazarella
Chuck McFadden
Yvette Mercourt
Reid Miller
Karren Mills
Peggy Mooney
Bill Morrissey
Harry Moskos

Ron Mulnix
Bruce Nathan
Greg Nokes
Larry Paladino
Jay Perkins
Lyle Price
Charles Richards
Bruce Richardson
Mort Rosenblum
Denis Searles
Richard Shafer
Susanne Shaw
Mike Short
Victor Simpson
Rick Spratling
Ed Staats
Karol Stonger
Mark Thayer
Marty Thompson
Hilmi Toros
Kernan Turner
Jeffrey Ulbrich
Jack Walker
Mike Waller
Bob Walsh
Dean Wariner
Don Waters
Lew Wheaton
Jeff Williams
Byron Yake
Johnny Yost
Kent Zimmerman

Stories of interest

Do you avoid the news? You're in growing company.

(Washington Post via MSN)

By Paul Farhi

The news was a lifelong habit for Claudia Caplan. It surrounded her like a blanket. Two newspapers in the morning, read nearly in full. Cable news in the afternoon or evening. NPR in the car the rest of the time.

But something changed during the pandemic. Maybe it was her. Maybe it was the news itself.

“It was so upsetting,” says Caplan, a retired advertising executive who is now a graduate student of history at New York University. “So frightening, so apocalyptic.”

And so Caplan began to turn away. Not all at once, and not completely, but today she’s less eager to immerse herself in the world’s troubles.

“I’ve always felt I had a responsibility to know everything,” she says. “I don’t feel that way anymore.”

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac, Sibby Christensen, Scott Charton.

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Q&A: Local news can’t be a ‘damsel in distress’ (Poynter)

By: Mark Caro

This article was originally published on Northwestern University’s Medill Local News Initiative website and is republished here with permission.

First of two parts

As executive editor of the Washington Post, Marty Baron not only guided the newspaper through a transformative ownership change (with Amazon founder Jeff Bezos taking charge) and the turbulent Trump presidency, but he also oversaw an aggressive expansion of its journalistic mission, accompanied by significant growth in readership, revenues and influence. Rallying behind its slogan “Democracy Dies in Darkness,” the Washington Post re-established itself as a national force in journalism at a time of rising distrust in the press.

Prior to that stint, which lasted from January 2013 to his February 2021 retirement, Baron spent 11 years as the Boston Globe’s top editor. His agenda there was different: scaling back the paper’s international and national ambitions to focus its coverage and investigations on the city and region. Its Pulitzer Prize-winning reporting of the Boston Catholic priest child sex-abuse scandal was dramatized in the 2015 best picture Oscar winner “Spotlight,” with Liev Schreiber playing the unflappable Baron.

Read more [here](#).

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NPR's Nina Totenberg inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame

August 1, 2023; Washington, D.C. – The Museum of Broadcast Communications has named Nina Totenberg a 2023 Radio Hall of Fame Inductee. Totenberg is part of a class of eight inductees representing current and former radio industry professionals.

Totenberg is an award-winning legal affairs correspondent with over three decades of experience covering the Supreme Court and legal affairs for NPR. Her reports air regularly on NPR's critically-acclaimed newsmagazines All Things Considered, Morning Edition, and Weekend Edition.

"Nina Totenberg belongs in the Radio Hall of Fame not just for her remarkable reporting, which has set the bar for coverage of the Supreme Court and made her a well-known voice for radio listeners for four decades, but also for opening doors for women in journalism," said John Lansing, President and CEO of NPR. "Nina has won every major journalism award you can imagine, but more important than that is her legacy of mentorship, breaking glass ceilings and leading by example, not just at NPR, but across the whole industry."

"I am thrilled at this great honor. There have been so many amazing people elected to the Radio Hall of Fame, from my dear friend the late Cokie Roberts, my colleague Susan Stamberg and of course, Wolfman Jack," added Totenberg.

Read more [here](#).

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Meta begins blocking news access on its platforms in Canada (CNN)

By Brian Fung

Washington - Meta has begun to remove news content from Facebook and Instagram in Canada, the social media giant said Tuesday, in response to recently passed legislation in the country that requires tech companies to negotiate payments to news organizations for hosting their content.

As a result of the move — which Meta had previously said would occur before the law takes effect — Meta's Canadian users will no longer be able to click on links to news articles posted to Facebook and Instagram.

The changes began Tuesday and will roll out gradually over the coming weeks, said Meta spokesperson Andy Stone.

The decision comes amid a global debate over the relationship between news organizations and social media companies about the value of news content, and who

gets to benefit from it.

Google has also announced that it plans to remove news content from its platforms in Canada when the law takes effect, which could happen by December.

Read more [here](#).

Today in History - Aug. 2, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 2, the 214th day of 2023. There are 151 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 2, 1923, the 29th president of the United States, Warren G. Harding, died in San Francisco; Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president.

On this date:

In 1776, members of the Second Continental Congress began attaching their signatures to the Declaration of Independence.

In 1873, inventor Andrew S. Hallidie (HAH'-lih-day) successfully tested a cable car he had designed for the city of San Francisco.

In 1876, frontiersman "Wild Bill" Hickok was shot and killed while playing poker at a saloon in Deadwood, Dakota Territory, by Jack McCall, who was later hanged.

In 1921, a jury in Chicago acquitted several former members of the Chicago White Sox baseball team and two others of conspiring to defraud the public in the notorious "Black Sox" scandal.

In 1922, Alexander Graham Bell, generally regarded as the inventor of the telephone, died in Nova Scotia, Canada, at age 75.

In 1934, German President Paul von Hindenburg died, paving the way for Adolf Hitler's complete takeover.

In 1939, Albert Einstein signed a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt urging creation of an atomic weapons research program.

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman, Soviet leader Josef Stalin and Britain's new prime minister, Clement Attlee, concluded the Potsdam conference.

In 1974, former White House counsel John W. Dean III was sentenced to one to four years in prison for obstruction of justice in the Watergate cover-up. (Dean ended up serving four months.)

In 1980, 85 people were killed when a bomb exploded at the train station in Bologna, Italy.

In 1985, 137 people were killed when Delta Air Lines Flight 191, a Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, crashed while attempting to land at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, seizing control of the oil-rich emirate. (The Iraqis were later driven out by the U.S. in Operation Desert Storm.)

Ten years ago: The United States issued an extraordinary global travel warning to Americans about the threat of an al-Qaida attack and closed down 21 embassies and consulates across the Muslim world for the weekend. Samantha Power was sworn in as the new United States Ambassador to the United Nations by Vice President Joe Biden, a day after the Senate approved her appointment by President Barack Obama 87-10.

Five years ago: Pope Francis decreed that the death penalty is "inadmissible" under all circumstances and the Catholic Church should campaign to abolish it. The Vatican said that Francis had amended the Catechism of the Catholic Church — the compilation of official Catholic teaching — to say that capital punishment can never be sanctioned because it constitutes an "attack" on the dignity of human beings. Apple became the world's first publicly-traded company to be valued at \$1 trillion. The Trump administration proposed weakening Obama-era mileage standards designed to make cars more fuel efficient and less polluting.

One year ago: U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi arrived in Taiwan, becoming the highest-ranking American official in 25 years to visit the self-ruled island claimed by China, which quickly announced that would will conduct military maneuvers in retaliation for her presence. The Justice Department filed a lawsuit challenging Idaho's restrictive abortion law, arguing that it conflicts with a federal law requiring doctors to provide pregnant women medically necessary treatment that could include abortion. The San Diego Padres acquired superstar outfielder Juan Soto from the Washington Nationals in one of baseball's biggest deals at the trade deadline

Today's Birthdays: Rock musician Garth Hudson (The Band) is 86. Singer Kathy Lennon (The Lennon Sisters) is 80. Actor Joanna Cassidy is 78. Actor Kathryn Harrold is 73. Actor Butch Patrick (TV: "The Munsters") is 70. Rock music producer/drummer Butch Vig (Garbage) is 68. Sen. Jacky Rosen, D-Nev., is 66. Singer Mojo Nixon is 66. Actor

Victoria Jackson is 64. Actor Apollonia is 64. Actor Cynthia Stevenson is 61. Actor Mary-Louise Parker is 59. Rock musician John Stanier (Helmet) is 55. Writer-actor-director Kevin Smith is 53. Actor Jacinda Barrett is 51. Actor Sam Worthington is 47. Actor Edward Furlong is 46. TV meteorologist Dylan Dreyer (TV: "Today") is 42. Actor Marci Miller is 38. Singer Charli XCX is 31. Actor Hallie Eisenberg 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.

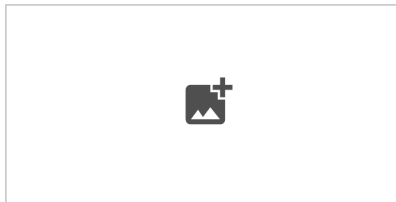
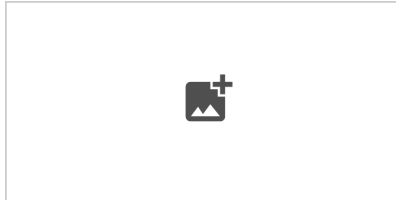
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

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

Paul Stevens

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