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# Connecting

Aug. 15, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Aug. 15, 2023,

We bring you followup on the extraordinary story from central Kansas where the Marion County Record was the target of a police raid on the newsroom and the home of its publisher, Eric Meyer.

It was learned Monday night that the Kansas Bureau of Investigation is now leading the criminal investigation that led to a raid, after the local police chief came under intense criticism for conducting the search. "As we transition, we will review prior steps taken and work to determine how best to proceed with the case. Once our thorough investigation concludes, we will forward all investigative facts to the prosecutor for review," KBI spokesperson Melissa Underwood said in a statement.

Click [here](#) for the latest AP story, which notes:

Friday's raids have been widely condemned by press freedom watchdogs as a blatant violation of the U.S. Constitution's protection for a free press. Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly called the raids "concerning." An attorney for the newspaper deemed the searches

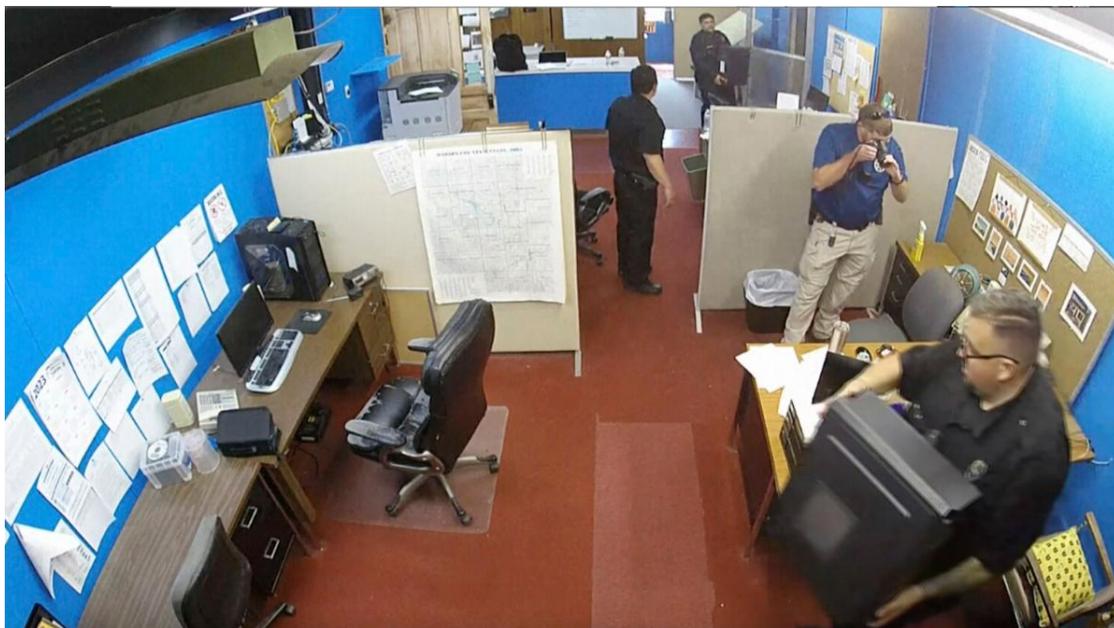
and seizures illegal and said the police department's action "offends the constitutional protections the founding fathers gave the free press." The Society of Professional Journalists pledged \$20,000 toward the newspaper's legal defense.

**MAUI WILDFIRES:** Click [here](#) for a GoFundMe campaign: Support Maui journalists covering wildfires

Have a great day - be safe, stay healthy, live the day to your fullest.

Paul

## EXPLAINER: Why is a police raid on a newspaper in Kansas so unusual?



**This surveillance video shows Marion Police Department confiscating computers and cellphones from the publisher and staff of the Marion County Record on Friday, Aug. 11, 2023 in Marion, Kan. The small newspaper and the police department in Kansas are at the center of a dispute over freedom of speech that is being watched around the country after police raided the office of the local newspaper and the home of its owner and publisher. (Marion County Record via AP)**

**BY DAVID BAUDER AND JIM SALTER**

NEW YORK (AP) — Tensions between public officials and the press are hardly unusual. To a large extent, it's baked into their respective roles.

What's rare in a democratic society is a police raid on a news organization's office or the home of its owner. So when that happened late last week, it attracted the sort of national attention that the town of Marion, Kansas, is hardly used to.

The Marion Police Department took computers and cellphones from the office of the Marion County Record newspaper on Friday, and also entered the home of Eric Meyer, publisher and editor. The weekly newspaper serves a town of 1,900 people that is about 150 miles (241 kilometers) southwest of Kansas City, Missouri.

Within two days, the raid drew the attention of some of the nation's largest media organizations, including The Associated Press, The New York Times, CNN, CBS News, the New Yorker and the Gannett newspaper chain.

### WHAT PROMPTED THIS ACTION?

Police said they had probable cause to believe there were violations of Kansas law, including one pertaining to identity theft, involving a woman named Kari Newell, according to a search warrant signed by Marion County District Court Magistrate Judge Laura Viar.

Newell is a local restaurant owner — and no big fan of the newspaper — who had Meyer and one of his reporters thrown out of an event being held there for a local congressman.

Newell said she believed the newspaper, acting on a tip, violated the law to get her personal information to check the status of her driver's license following a 2008 conviction for drunk driving. Meyer said the Record decided not to write about it, but when Newell revealed at a subsequent city council meeting that she had driven while her license was suspended, that was reported.

Meyer also believes the newspaper's aggressive coverage of local issues, including the background of Marion Police Chief Gideon Cody, played a part in the raid.

Read more [here](#).

## Dozens of news organizations condemn police raid on Kansas newspaper and call for seized materials to be returned

By Jon Passantino, CNN

Dozens of news organizations on Sunday condemned a police raid on a Kansas newspaper and its publisher's home, sending a letter to the local police department's chief urging him to immediately return all seized materials.

The four-page letter, sent by the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press to Marion Police Chief Gideon Cody, was signed by 34 news and press freedom organizations, including CNN, The Associated Press, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times and others.

"Newsroom searches and seizures are among the most intrusive actions law enforcement can take with respect to the free press, and the most potentially

suppressive of free speech by the press and the public,” the letter said.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Linda Deutsch.

## Marion newspaper’s lawyer chastises police for treating newspaper as ‘drug cartel,’ ‘street gang’

BY: TIM CARPENTER  
Kansas Reflector

TOPEKA — An attorney representing the Marion County Record in wake of a raid of the newspaper’s office urged Marion law enforcement officials to stop short of examining computers and other seized property pending a court hearing on whether the search violated legal standards.

Bernie Rhodes, a lawyer from Kansas City, Missouri, said in a three-page letter to Marion Police Chief Gideon Cody that treatment of the newspaper and its employees as if they were participants in a violent criminal enterprise ran afoul of mandates in the U.S. Constitution designed to protect freedom of the press.

He advised the police chief, who has defended the decision Friday to raid the Marion County Record, the home of the publisher and a member of the Marion City Council, to take advantage of a window of opportunity to mitigate legal damage.

“Your personal decision to treat the local newspaper as a drug cartel or a street gang offends the constitutional protections the founding fathers gave the free press,” Rhodes said in the document. “I can assure you that the Record will take every step to obtain relief for the damages your heavy-handed actions have already caused my client.”

Read more [here](#). Shared by Bill McCloskey.

## William Allen White Foundation statement on Marion police raid

As you’ve undoubtedly seen on news outlets nationwide, a small-town Kansas newspaper was the target of a stunning police raid Friday that poses a fundamental challenge to First Amendment rights. A fellow trustee – Eric Meyer – is at the center of the firestorm. He is the editor of the Marion County Record, which now faces an epic legal fight with high stakes for journalists across the country.

The WAWF executive committee approved the following statement, issued jointly with the faculty of KU’s J-School over the weekend, to show solidarity with the Marion County Record news staff in confronting this challenge. You will notice that we drew

on the wisdom of William Allen White himself in his Pulitzer-Prize winning editorial, "To an Anxious Friend," when he faced arrest in defense of free speech.

Statement from the KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications affirming our commitment to the First Amendment:

"We stand with our alumni and all journalists who work tirelessly, and often at great personal cost, to ensure that the public is well-informed. The school, along with the William Allen White Foundation Board of Trustees, affirm that any threat to journalism is a threat to democracy itself. As our namesake once famously wrote in his own small-town Kansas newspaper: 'Only when free utterance is suppressed is it needed, and when it is needed, it is most vital to justice.'"

"Our hearts go out to Eric Meyer and his family on the loss of his mother, Joan, co-owner of the Marion County Record."

As this episode shows, journalism is not for the faint of heart. We wish for Eric and his staff the courage and stamina to see this challenge through, and again we send condolences to family and friends on the loss of fellow journalist Mrs. Meyer.

The William Allen White Foundation Executive Committee  
Ann Brill, president; dean of the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications  
Barb Rosewicz, chair  
Eric Nelson, vice-chair  
Michelle Keller, secretary

## Thanks for Marion coverage

[Mort Rosenblum](#) - Multiple thanks to you, the Connecting crew and so many others who have weighed in on Kansas thugs with badges on the public payroll assaulting the noble Record. During five decades in a lot of places that our ex-president dubbed "shit holes" — which are only small countries where a lot of decent people suffer from leaders they did not elect — I've seen such sickening outrages. And I've always been thankful for an air travel card and a blue passport that allowed me to take a break periodically on home ground where such things were unthinkable. No longer. So many people out here in the rest of the world ask me the same question, in various ways: Why do people with the right to vote in a brandname democracy up on its much-ballyhooed City on a Hill let that happen? We all have answers that we could spend days putting on paper (or into electrons). But, in the end, it still keeps happening. I expect 2024 will be America's final referendumb.

## Capturing importance of newspapers to their communities

[Chris Connell](#) - On such a busy and troubling morning, with news of the police raid in Marion and the horror in Maui, I hope people got to the bottom of Monday's Connecting and read [Dana Milbank's story](#) on the Rappahannock News. It captures

how important newspapers are to their communities and how much is lost when they shut down, as several thousand have.

I'm among the veteran journalists the Freedom Forum hires to do occasional project reporting that the News cannot pursue with its own bare-bones staff. What's remarkable is not just that journalists who moved out from Washington to retire to their weekend homes in the rustic county came together to found Foothills, but they have marshaled support from a wide array of other civic-minded residents. Piedmont Journalism Foundation, headed by former Washington Post publisher Bo Jones with a board that includes Post Pulitzer Prize-winner Dana Priest, does the same next door for the Fauquier Times and Prince William Times, which the foundation now owns.

I don't know if philanthropy can save or at least bolster local journalism, but it is worth a try in more places.

## Our Stylebook editor is a champion cyclist



**Paula Froke** - I competed last week in the Masters National Track Cycling Championships in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Took silver medals in the 60-64 age group in the match sprints, points race and scratch race, and a bronze in the 2K pursuit. Also got the Best All-Around Rider award for my age group (photo at right). Two years ago, the last time I did Nationals, I won the match sprints. The competition was much stiffer this time around, and I was thrilled with the silver. For the uninitiated: Track cycling involves riding a fixed-gear, no-brakes bike very fast around an oval. The Rock Hill velodrome is 250 meters with banking in the four corners of 42.5 degrees (a mere 17 degrees on the straights). A bit of a climb to get up those turns.

I'd been a runner for a number of years (including anchoring the Pennsylvania state high school champion mile relay in 1977). Then injuries ended my running career, and

as a substitute I discovered the joys of cycling in 2006. For a decade I did just recreational riding on the road. Then I found track cycling and fell in love with it. These days, road riding is too dangerous for my taste – too many riders are getting hit by distracted drivers. So when not on the track, I do my recreational riding on gravel roads through state forests and other scenic spots.

Now I'm getting caught up with Stylebook work for a few days before leaving for a four-day gravel bike event. I need to make sure to take the right bike!

## Robbie Robertson And The Magic of Music





**Jim Reindl:** Against my already questionable judgment, I'm sending this one, circa 1973, my high school senior year. This was the school newspaper crew and that's me lurking in the right back w/the shades. I was a columnist by then.

**Jim Reindl** - As a habitual air guitar player, occasional lyricist and dad lucky enough to have a musician son willing to cut a record with me, I just want to say thanks publicly to AP's Scott Bauer for his wonderful tribute in Connecting last week to Robbie Robertson. It's always a pleasure to me to see how and which music moves people.

My teen years began the year "Music From Big Pink" was released and I've always liked The Band, but that isn't what we were listening to growing up in the downriver industrial suburbs of Detroit. It was Motown and some of the greatest rock 'n roll ever (no groans from the Cleveland contingent, please). WKNR and CKLW, which was across the river in Windsor, Ontario, filled the AM airwaves with both. Having a sister seven years older than me, I might be the only grade-schooler ever driven to school in a powder blue Mustang blasting Martha Reeves out the windows. It was an honor.

The existential crisis of Dylan's folk fans was a galaxy unknown to us and certainly wouldn't have mattered had we known. We were too busy dancing in the street to those beats.

We spent our high-school Friday and Saturday nights in the cafeteria of a Catholic school the next town over rocking out to the likes of Bob Seger, Ted Nugent and Alice Cooper, long before they were mega stars, right-wing musical propagandists or Hollywood horror show artists. Cooper once ripped up a pillow and tossed the cover into the Gabriel Richard cafeteria audience, landing it on my lap (a far cry from his famous 1969 Chicken-throwing incident in Toronto). I had that souvenir for quite a while until I made an “adult” decision to get rid of it years later.

Detroit was also home to a couple of the seminal “underground” FM rock stations, though it’s hard to be too underground when you need an FCC license. In my first year of public school – 9th grade – I used to run home a dozen blocks to spend 10 minutes of my half-hour lunch listening to WABX before dashing back to school. Looking back, I’m not sure I’ve ever been as committed to anything since. The DJs sounded like the coolest people on earth and they regularly had people on like John Sinclair or would play a song, say how much they dug it, then play it again. Magic.

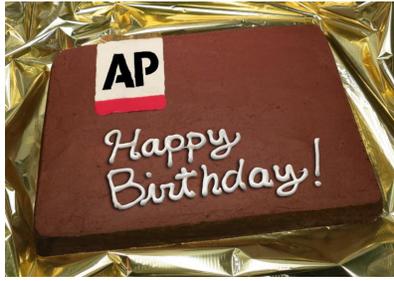
So thanks, Scott. Thanks for sharing how the magic touched you and for reminding me of how it touched me then and still does today. RIP, Robbie (and Rodriguez) and rock on!

## From northwest China



**Patrick Casey** - My wife, Zhang Wanli, took this photo during a recent six-day photo expedition in the mountains near the upper reaches of the Yellow River in northwest China, about 2,000 kilometers from Beijing.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Dan Perry](#)

[Cindy Saul](#)

## Stories of interest

### *Trump's potential Georgia trial could be first one televised* (Axios)

Ivana Saric

For those hoping to watch any of the historic legal proceedings against former President Trump on live television, the only option might be a potential case in Georgia.

Why it matters: If Trump is charged as part of the state-level election interference probe, the public could hear and see evidence against him — intensifying potential political repercussions for the GOP presidential frontrunner.

State of play: Georgia law requires that cameras be allowed during judicial proceedings with a judge's approval. Cameras are seen as an important aspect of transparency.

A judge would need a compelling reason — such as a juvenile victim or witness — to bar them, per Atlanta News First. Neither are likely to apply.

Under Georgia's rules, the public could be able to watch Trump's potential arraignment — as well as an entire potential criminal trial, per NBC News.

That's not been the case in federal and New York courts, where Trump's other indictments have taken place.

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

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## ***The poster child for micropayments for news is getting out of the micropayments business*** (Nieman Lab)

By JOSHUA BENTON

How's everyone enjoying the new micropayments setup on Twitter, er, X? You know, the one that lets you pay for access to a single paywalled news article instead of buying a subscription.

What's that? You haven't seen it? I confess I've been looking all over for it. But it has to be somewhere, since Elon Musk said it would roll out in May, and it is now August, and we all know Elon Musk has never X'd a falsehood.

I'm sure he'll figure it all out eventually, once he checks the calendar. But until he does, the iconic pay-per-article company will remain Blendle, the Dutch platform that's been at it for nearly a decade.

Ring a bell? You might remember Politico saying it "could save journalism," or The Guardian asking if it could "save the press from oblivion," or The Wall Street Journal suggesting it could "save the print news industry."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Claude Erbsen.

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## ***Alex Mena named Miami Herald's executive editor. 'We have so much more to accomplish'*** (Miami Herald)

BY HOWARD COHEN

Newsroom leader Alex Mena, who rose from answering phones as a teenager at the Miami Herald to become managing editor of the storied newsroom, on Monday was named executive editor of the Miami Herald and el Nuevo Herald. Mena, 50, becomes the Miami Herald's first immigrant executive editor. A Nicaraguan child who came across the Rio Grande on his father's shoulders, Mena worked his way up to lead sports and metro news departments, el Nuevo Herald, and helped direct the Herald's Pulitzer Prize-winning coverage of the Surfside condo collapse. In his new role, Mena will also oversee the executive editor of the Bradenton Herald as Florida Regional Editor for McClatchy, the parent company of the three Florida publications. Mena has been overseeing all three newsrooms in an interim role since February. TOP VIDEOS

Read more [here](#). Shared by Linda Deutsch.

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## ***CNN revamps schedule, with new roles for Phillip, Coates, Wallace and Amanpour*** (AP)

By **DAVID BAUDER**

NEW YORK (AP) — CNN is emphasizing homegrown stars and reporting chops in a schedule reboot that gives weeknight shows to Abby Phillip and Laura Coates, along with bringing Christiane Amanpour back onto the domestic network regularly.

Virtually no part of the day or weekend goes unchanged in the plans announced on Monday, the first major move by the leadership quartet that replaced ousted network chief Chris Licht on June 1.

Phillip, a political reporter, and Coates, the network's chief legal correspondent, both began at CNN in part-time roles. Soon they'll have back-to-back hours on the network's schedule each weeknight starting at 10 p.m. Eastern.

They'll join Kaitlan Collins at 9 p.m. and Erin Burnett two hours earlier, with Anderson Cooper the only man in the important five-hour stretch that includes prime time. Since Chris Cuomo was fired in December 2021, CNN hasn't had a regular prime-time lineup, and its new leaders considered it a top priority to project consistency to viewers and employees.

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

## Today in History – Aug. 15, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 15, the 227th day of 2023. There are 138 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**

On Aug. 15, 1969, the Woodstock Music and Art Fair opened in upstate New York.

**On this date:**

In 1057, Macbeth, King of Scots, was killed in battle by Malcolm, the eldest son of King Duncan, whom Macbeth had slain.

In 1769, Napoleon Bonaparte was born on the island of Corsica.

In 1914, the Panama Canal officially opened as the SS Ancon crossed the just-completed waterway between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

In 1935, humorist Will Rogers and aviator Wiley Post were killed when their airplane crashed near Point Barrow in the Alaska Territory.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces landed in southern France in Operation Dragoon.

In 1945, in a pre-recorded radio address, Japan's Emperor Hirohito announced that his country had accepted terms of surrender for ending World War II.

In 1947, India became independent after some 200 years of British rule.

In 1961, as workers began constructing a Berlin Wall made of concrete, East German soldier Conrad Schumann leapt to freedom over a tangle of barbed wire.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon announced a 90-day freeze on wages, prices and rents.

In 1989, F.W. de Klerk was sworn in as acting president of South Africa, one day after P.W. Botha resigned as the result of a power struggle within the National Party.

In 1998, 29 people were killed by a car bomb that tore apart the center of Omagh (OH'-mah), Northern Ireland; a splinter group calling itself the Real IRA claimed responsibility.

In 2003, bouncing back from the largest blackout in U.S. history, cities from the Midwest to Manhattan restored power to millions of people.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama scrapped plans for joint military exercises with Egypt, where spiraling violence in and around Cairo was claiming hundreds of lives. A powerful car bomb ripped through a crowded southern Beirut stronghold of Hezbollah, killing at least 27 people.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump revoked the security clearance of ex-CIA Director John Brennan in an unprecedented act of retribution against a vocal critic; Trump later told The Wall Street Journal that Brennan was among those he held responsible for the Russia investigation. In a speech blasting Trump and his "Make America Great Again" slogan, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said America "was never that great," and wouldn't be great until all Americans share true equality. (Cuomo would later say that his words had been "inartful," and that "America has always been great.") A suicide bomber struck a private education center in a Shiite neighborhood of the Afghan capital, killing 34 young men and women; the Islamic State group claimed responsibility.

One year ago: Prosecutors in Atlanta told lawyers for Rudy Giuliani that he was a target of their criminal investigation into possible illegal attempts by then-President Donald Trump and others to interfere in the 2020 general election in Georgia. It was the latest step as the probe edged closer to the former president. An Iranian government official denied that Tehran was involved in the stabbing of author Salman Rushdie. But the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry sought to justify the attack, saying Iran did not "consider anyone deserving reproach, blame or even condemnation, except for himself and his supporters." Legendary college coach Pete Carril, who led Princeton to 11 appearances in the NCAA basketball tournament, died at age 92.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Jim Dale is 88. Actor Pat Priest is 87. Retired Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer is 85. U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., is 85. Musician Pete York (Spencer Davis Group) is 81. Author-journalist Linda Ellerbee is 79. Songwriter Jimmy Webb is 77. Rock singer-musician Tom Johnston (The Doobie Brothers) is 75. Actor Phyllis Smith is 74. Britain's Princess Anne is 73. Actor Tess Harper is 73. Actor Larry Mathews is 68. Actor Zeljko Ivanek (ZEHL'-koh eh-VAHN'-ehk) is 66. Actor-comedian Rondell Sheridan is 65. Rock singer-musician Matt Johnson (The The) is 62. Movie director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (ihn-YAH'-ee-tu) is 60. Philanthropist Melinda Gates is 59. Country singer Angela Rae (Wild Horses) is 57. Actor Peter Hermann is 56. Actor Debra Messing is 55. Actor Anthony Anderson is 53. Actor Ben Affleck is 51. Singer Mikey Graham (Boyzone) is 51. Actor Natasha Henstridge is 49. Actor Nicole Paggi is 46. Christian rock musician Tim Foreman (Switchfoot) is 45. Actor Emily Kinney is 39. Figure skater Jennifer Kirk is 39. Latin pop singer Belinda is 34. Actor Courtney Hope is 34. Rock singer Joe Jonas (The Jonas Brothers) is 34. Actor-singer Carlos PenaVega is 34. Actor Jennifer Lawrence is 33.

## 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 Central Region vice president based in Kansas City.

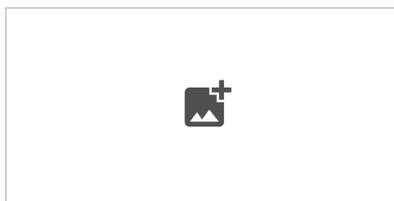
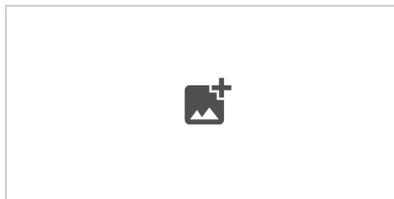
Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

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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