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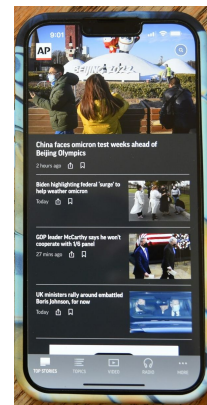
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Connecting

Sept. 1, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this Sept. 1, 2023,

Memories of Hurricane Kate, spawned by Idalia...a picnic in a Colorado town that no longer exists...giving up his shark's jaw...

These are highlights of today's Connecting as we begin the month of September.

Norm's World – colleague [Peggy Walsh](#) writes, "The emotions of hope, possibilities and brotherhood that Norm Abelson felt 60 years ago at the "I Have A Dream" speech reflect beautifully the best among us. Let's hope we can find that again. Thank you, Norm, for memories amid the madness." See Norm's essay in Thursday's Connecting.

Just turned 80 or 90 in the past month? Congratulations, and drop me a reminder note so you're included in the monthly listing of our 80s/90s Club to be published in Monday's edition. Your age is a badge of honor!

Here's to the new month – be safe, stay healthy, live each day to your fullest.

Paul

Memories revived of Hurricane Kate



Photo from Mark Wallheiser of the Tallahassee Democrat showing US 98 washed out by Kate.

[Edward Birk](#) - Hurricane Idalia revived memories of covering Hurricane Kate in November 1985.

It was a late-season hurricane that made land fall on the night of November 21, 1985, over Port St. Joe, Florida in Gulf County, west of the Apalachicola River. Much of the storm's land-fall coverage came from members of the Capital Press Corps in Tallahassee. This was a time before cell phones, so we all had to rely on communicating through locally owned phone companies, which was unreliable in bad weather.

From prior storms, I knew that St. Joe Telephone company service would go down early as the hurricane approached the panhandle coast. Also, coastal Highway 98, linking Apalachicola to Port St. Joe to the west, would quickly become impassable. Wave action frequently washed out the two-lane road and many sections of US98 remained undermined from Hurricane Elena in September 1985.

While most of the Capital Press Corps was ensconced in the restaurant and bar of the historic Gibson Inn in Apalachicola, waiting for landfall, I quietly left to drive westward to Port St. Joe where the storm was headed and where more reliable phone service would be available. Later in the evening, the eye of the hurricane moved directly over the county emergency operations center. Before landfall, I interviewed the owner of a restaurant at the intersection of Highway 97 and state road 71, overlooking the beach.

He was by that time operating only with candlelight and gas cooking. When I left the restaurant to file my report the storm surge had crossed the beach and US 98 and headed up state road 71. It had reached the door of my rental car. It was time to move inland.

For about an hour, the calm winds of the eye gave Port St. Joe a respite from the storm. Eerie is the word that fits. In the morning, Governor Bob Graham toured the damage by helicopter and landed in a field near Port St. Joe for a presser.

Always skilled at cultivating good press relations, he noted to the assembled reporters that the AP had the only datelined story from Port St. Joe where Kate made landfall. After the storm passed, I called the restaurant owner to see how he fared. He and his restaurant survived. He reported that after the AP mentioned him in its reporting, he had calls from national and local news outlets all over the country wanting to know about conditions on the ground.

As usual, the AP's coverage was a group effort. In the days leading up to landfall, Greg Myre reported from the National Hurricane Center in Coral Gables on how unusual it was to have a hurricane after the season ended on November 1. Janet Braunstein reported from Miami on Kate's entry into the Gulf of Mexico. Pensacola correspondent Bill Kaczor reported on pre-storm and post-storm government actions. Larry Hobbs, the daytime filer in Miami, had more knowledge of Florida history than any other member of the Florida staff, directing coverage expertly. Untold others in Tallahassee, Miami, Tampa, Orlando and Jacksonville contributed to our coverage. That was the power of the AP.

The Uravan Picnic



Swag included T-shirts, one of which glowed in the dark. (Photos by Neal Ulevich)



At Naturita, only this sign for a defunct drive in suggests the Uranium mines and mill at nearby Uravan.

Neal Ulevich - It was a picnic like many others except for the 300 or so at Uravan, a Colorado town that no longer exists.

Road signs still lead to this buried place and it appears on many maps. But Uravan was razed in detail when the uranium mill and other buildings - Uravan once was home to 800 - were buried with their radioactive contamination. Destroying Uravan began in 1986, was complete by 2001.

Uravan was a contraction of uranium and vanadium. The latter mineral was more important than uranium until the Manhattan Project began quietly buying up the former, some of which ended up in the first A-bomb.

The Manhattan Project and Cold War years - and government-subsidized high uranium prices - kept Uravan alive until the 1960s, when its usefulness came to an end.

(No one I spoke with had seen the movie Oppenheimer yet. The nearest cinema is in Grand Junction, a hundred miles away).

A ballpark, once a part of town, is the home of the annual picnic. The event brings together those who lived and worked in Uravan, their families and descendants. Of those who did the work not many remain. Some are in their 90s.

The swag also distinguished this picnic. T-shirts for sale carried mock warnings of radiation. One with a slightly higher price glows in the dark.

A cake was frosted with the words Yellow Cake - the term for semi-refined uranium - and a radiation symbol.

I came to this family reunion (August 26) as a cousin twice removed, having years ago given the local museum a Geiger counter which I built from a kit. The museum placed it next to a big jar of Yellow Cake. The Geiger counter goes nuts when powered up. (Yellow Cake is about as radioactive as uranium in the ground and does not present a hazard unless inhaled or otherwise taken into the body).

I had not been to the area for some years. Naturita, the nearest town, now focuses on sport cycling traffic. The road leading south from Grand Junction contains some of the most mind-boggling canyon scenery in Colorado. Rocky Mountain Big Horn Sheep loll nearby, ignoring the occasional car. So bike shops abound in Naturita and now two marijuana shops, one at each end of the main drag.

A big sign touts the uranium drive in theater, no longer in business. (Another sign, adjacent, marks Blondies Restaurant, where the food has improved remarkably since my last visit).



Jane Thompson of the Rimrockers Historical Society jokes with veterans of the Uravan Uranium Mill, all in their 90s.

The museum run by the Rimrockers Historical Society has of late moved up the hill to another nearby town, Nucla.

The federal government has monitored the health of those who worked in the mill and nearby uranium mines and supplied assistance to those afflicted by their years of employment. Studies over many decades indicate mill workers suffered cancer no more frequently than the population at large. The miners were different. Years of inhaling mine air laced with radioactive radon gas caused a greater incidence of cancer. Smoking, so common at the time, didn't help.

The drive through canyon country is highly recommended. As is a visit to the newly relocated museum at Nucla.

No more seeing kids' jaws drop when I brandish this shark jaw



Malcolm Ritter - I'm sad to have worked my last shift as an "explainer" in the shark exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History. The exhibit closes on Monday. No more seeing kids' jaws drop when I brandish this shark jaw. No more reaching back to my college French when necessary to talk about how sharks replace their teeth. No more assuring visitors that no matter what they've seen on TV, the bus-sized megalodon really is extinct.

The exhibit will move on to other museums. I've made my mark by pointing out a typo in one of the computer-generated signs. We writers have our standards.

I still work every week in the live-butterfly room, telling visitors about the hundreds of butterflies flitting around them. I will soon begin the rigorous class for becoming a tour guide. And this fall will bring a new exhibit, Secrets of the Elephants. Maybe I will get to wield a tusk.

Evening clouds in Colorado



Shared by [Paul Albright](#).

Moon shots

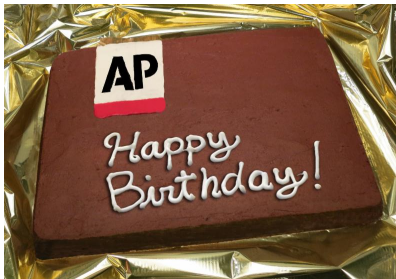


In Los Angeles, by Nick Ut



In Shawnee Mission, Kansas, by Paul Stevens

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Bill Chevalier](#)

[John Hanna](#)

[Don Ryan](#)

On Saturday to...

[Pauline Jelinek](#)

[Mary Junck](#)

Stories of interest

Gannett to pause AI experiment after botched high school sports articles (CNN)

By Clare Duffy

New York (CNN) - Newspaper chain Gannett has paused the use of an artificial intelligence tool to write high school sports dispatches after the technology made several major flubs in articles in at least one of its papers.

Several high school sports reports written by an AI service called LedeAI and published by the Columbus Dispatch earlier this month went viral on social media this week — and not in a good way.

In one notable example, preserved by the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, the story began: "The Worthington Christian defeated the Westerville North 2-1 in an Ohio boys soccer game on Saturday." The page has since been updated.

The reports were mocked on social media for being repetitive, lacking key details, using odd language and generally sounding like they'd been written by a computer with no actual knowledge of sports.

CNN identified several other local Gannett outlets, including the Louisville Courier Journal, AZ Central, Florida Today and the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, that have all published similar stories written by LedeAI in recent weeks.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Scott Charton.

-0-

Trump hearings, trials will be YouTube live streamed (ANF)

By Tim Darnell

ATLANTA, Ga. (Atlanta News First) - For the first time in American history, cameras and live streaming coverage will be allowed inside the courtroom when a former U.S. president stands trial for allegedly running a criminal enterprise designed to overturn the lawful results of an election.

On Thursday, Fulton County Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee said he will permit a live YouTube stream of all related hearings and trials that emanating from District Attorney Fani Willis' vast, sweeping indictment of former President Donald Trump. The live stream will be operated by the court.

Also on Thursday:

Trump pleaded not guilty to all of the charges brought against him by Willis two weeks ago. Trump and 18 other co-defendants are accused of attempting to overturn the

results of Georgia's 2020 presidential election.

As expected, Trump's new Georgia lead attorney, Steven Sadow, also filed a motion to sever Trump's indictment from those issued by Willis. Trump's motion follows similar attempts from his former White House chief of staff, Mark Meadows, and Trump attorney Sidney Powell, to do the same. Trump also waived his Sept. 6 arraignment.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Peggy Walsh.

Today in History - Sept. 1, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Sept. 1, the 244th day of 2023. There are 121 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 1, 1983, 269 people were killed when a Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 was shot down by a Soviet jet fighter after the airliner entered Soviet airspace.

On this date:

In 1715, following a reign of 72 years, King Louis XIV of France died four days before his 77th birthday.

In 1897, the first section of Boston's new subway system was opened.

In 1923, the Japanese cities of Tokyo and Yokohama were devastated by an earthquake that claimed some 140,000 lives.

In 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland, an event regarded as the start of World War II.

In 1969, a coup in Libya brought Moammar Gadhafi to power.

In 1972, American Bobby Fischer won the international chess crown in Reykjavik, Iceland, as Boris Spassky of the Soviet Union resigned before the resumption of Game

21.

In 1985, a U.S.-French expedition located the wreckage of the Titanic on the floor of the Atlantic Ocean roughly 400 miles off Newfoundland.

In 2005, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin issued a “desperate SOS” as his city descended into anarchy amid the flooding left by Hurricane Katrina.

In 2009, Vermont’s law allowing same-sex marriage went into effect.

In 2015, invoking “God’s authority,” Rowan County, Kentucky, Clerk Kim Davis denied marriage licenses to gay couples again in direct defiance of the federal courts, and vowed not to resign, even under the pressure of steep fines or jail.

Ten years ago: Syria derided President Barack Obama’s decision to hold off on punitive military strikes, while the Obama administration countered that its case for military action against the regime of President Bashar Assad was getting stronger, saying it had evidence that the nerve agent sarin was used in a deadly August attack. Former South African President Nelson Mandela left a hospital after nearly three months of treatment. Former heavyweight boxing champion Tommy Morrison, 44, died at a Nebraska hospital.

Five years ago: At a nearly three-hour memorial service for the late Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain in Washington, McCain’s daughter and two former presidents led a public rebuke of President Donald Trump’s divisive politics and called for a return to civility among the nation’s leaders. Human rights watch said an airstrike by the Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen’s Iran-aligned Houthi rebels that hit a school bus, killing dozens of people including 40 children, was an “apparent war crime.”

One year ago: A United Nations inspection team entered Ukraine’s Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant on a mission to safeguard it against catastrophe, reaching the site amid fighting between Russian and Ukrainian forces that prompted the shutdown of one reactor and underscored the urgency of the task. Singer R. Kelly told a federal judge that he would not testify at his ongoing trial in Chicago on charges that accused him of child pornography and enticement of minors for sex. (Kelly would be convicted and sentenced to 20 years in prison.)

Today’s Birthdays: Conductor Seiji Ozawa (SAY’-jee oh-ZAH’-wah) is 88. Attorney and law professor Alan Dershowitz is 85. Comedian-actor Lily Tomlin is 84. Actor Don Stroud is 80. Conductor Leonard Slatkin is 79. Singer Archie Bell is 79. Singer Barry Gibb is 77. Rock musician Greg Errico is 75. Talk show host Dr. Phil McGraw is 73. Singer Gloria Estefan is 66. Jazz musician Boney James is 62. Singer-musician Grant Lee Phillips (Grant Lee Buffalo) is 60. Country singer-songwriter Charlie Robison is 59. Retired NBA All-Star Tim Hardaway is 57. Actor Ricardo Antonio Chavira is 52. Actor Maury Sterling is 52. Rock singer JD Fortune is 50. Actor Scott Speedman is 48. Country singer Angaleena Presley (Pistol Annies) is 47. Actor Boyd Holbrook is 42. Actor Zoe Lister-Jones is 41. Rock musician Joe Trohman is 39. Actor Aisling (ASH’-ling) Loftus 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.



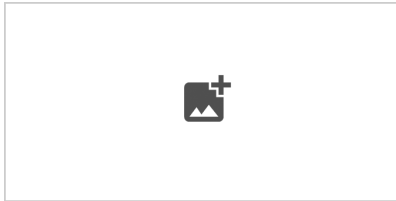
Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

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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