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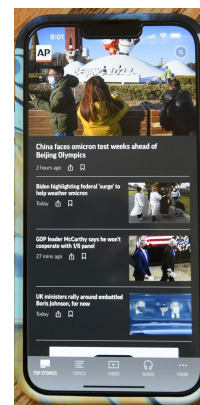
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# Connecting

Oct. 24, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Oct. 24, 2023,

Forty years ago Monday, one of the deadliest attacks on U.S. military personnel took place in Beirut, Lebanon. a Shiite Muslim suicide bomber killed 241 U.S. military personnel, including 220 Marines, 18 sailors and three soldiers in a terrorist bombing of the Marine Corps barracks.

Our colleague **Bill Foley**, an AP photographer, was there – and shares the story of AP coverage of the horrific event. His photo of U.S. Marines rescuing an injured comrade was a Finalist in the 1984 Pulitzer Prize spot news category. It’s the lead photo in Bill’s story.

When alerted to the blast by a phone call in his apartment, Foley and another Connecting colleague, **Terry Anderson**, then the AP’s Beirut bureau chief, were off to the scene. Two years later, Anderson was taken hostage by Shia Hezbollah militants of the Islamic Jihad Organization in Lebanon and held until 1991.

Today's issue brings you some memories of **Claudia DiMartino** as shared by her colleagues. See Monday's Connecting for a story on her life. If you have a story to share, please send it along.

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

Paul

*40 years ago:*

## The blast, a phone call, then off to cover a tragic scene



**Survivor-Marine lifted from the rubble of the Battalion Landing team Headquarters, October 23, 1983. AP Photo/Bill Foley**

**Bill Foley** – 40 years ago, a Shiite Muslim suicide bomber drove a bomb masquerading as a truck into the US Marine battalion landing team headquarters at Beirut airport, killing 241 US Marines at about 0600 on Sunday morning, October 23, 1983.

Hard to miss the sound of the blast. Then the phone in my apartment started ringing.

The AP office was on the line, telling me that the Marines at the airport had been attacked with a bomb, and that the French headquarters had also been attacked.

Moments later, Terry Anderson, the AP bureau chief who lived in an apartment upstairs, and I were on the road to the Marine base at Beirut airport.

As we got closer to the base on the airport road, I couldn't see the top of the four-story Marine Battalion Landing team HQ. I turned to Terry and said It's gone! Terry asked, What's gone? The BLT, I said.

Seconds later we arrived at the base. In front of us was a scene out a war movie. People were screaming, smoke covered everything making it hard to see. The former four-story BLT building was now reduced to a story and a half of rubble. The bomber had driven into the center atrium of the building and set the bomb off, bringing the building down.

News traveled fast and the Beirut based foreign and Lebanese press had gathered at the scene. TV crews, photographers and writers were wandering around the site, recording the carnage.

US Marine Major Bob Jordan, the head of the Marine Corps PAO office, arrived and corralled everyone to the front of his office to bring order to the press coverage. His office and the parking lot were approximately 50 yards north of the Battalion Landing Team HQ that now looked more like Dante's 3<sup>rd</sup> circle in the Inferno than the building I had spent so much time in, spending countless hours and occasionally spending the night as I covered the activities of the Marine Corps personnel based in Beirut and labeled "Peacekeepers".

The following days and weeks would be spent at the site, photographing the wreckage as well as talking to the victims and survivors.

On that first day of the bombing, I had been chosen along with other journalists to be part of the first group that would be escorted around the site. Walking slowly south toward the building, one stepped carefully, watching the ground in front of you for victims and debris. When we were close enough, the tv crews started rolling and the photographers and writers made photographs and took notes as we walked along, being led the by a Marine with the Public affairs office.

As we reached the west side of the destroyed building, there was a flurry of activity in front of us and the group stopped as we recorded rescuers carefully removing a Marine survivor on a stretcher from the rubble. This would be one of the few bright moments on an otherwise dark day despite the Mediterranean sunshine.

Later that afternoon as I was talking to Marines in the parking lot outside the PAO office, 21-year-old Lance Corporal Robert Calhoun comes up to me, gives me a big hug, looks at me, as he says "WHY ME?" He was distraught over the fact that he had survived, while his friends had not. Robert had been on duty on the roof of the building and had seen the truck with the bomb blow throw through checkpoint just outside the building. Seconds later, the blast went off. He managed to remain on his feet and rode down the collapsing building like an elevator to hell. Stepping off the rubble, his ears bleeding from the concussion of 12,000 pounds of explosives going off

underneath him, he said his only goal was to find help for his friends who were underneath the rubble.

Now it was hours later, and as he told me of his experience, I had few words to comfort him. We hugged again and then he left to find someone to tell him what he should do now.

The following days and weeks were spent covering the Marines as they continued the search for survivors and cleaned up the site.

The Beirut-based media spent most of their time at the Marine Base until a PLO war began in Tripoli, North Lebanon in early November of 1983 between Yasser Arafat's Fateh fighters and Syrian backed PLO factions fighting for control of the Palestinian camps in Tripoli.



**Marines on lookout on the roof of the US Marine Battalion Landing Team headquarters, Beirut Airport Sept. 1983.**



**Ten Years Later, US Marine Base, Beirut airport, April 1993.**

In April of 1993, 10 years after the US Embassy on the corniche in West Beirut was attacked on April 18, and the Marine base was attacked on October 23, AP correspondent Earleen Fisher and I returned to Beirut to do a series of stories on the decade anniversary. In addition, we did a series of stories on the general situation in Lebanon after Syrian President Hafez Assad had “ended” the Lebanese civil war that had been going on since 1975.

Flying into Beirut over the Mediterranean Sea, I looked down and could see the empty area South of the new Beirut Airport terminal, once occupied by the US Marine Peacekeeping operation at the airport. Flying into Beirut in 2008, I noted that most of the area once occupied by the Marines had been swallowed up by new airport construction.

In October of 1993, I traveled to Camp Lejeune for the Marine ceremony remembering the lives lost in 1983. There I reconnected with the Marines I had worked with in Beirut 10 years earlier. Three photographers, Claude Salhani, Chas Cancellare and I attended the events at Camp Lejeune and raised a few glasses to remember those we lost in 1983.

## The media's 'bothsidesist'

**Dan Perry** - There has been some debate about the media being bothsidesist in the Gaza war, and accepting as equally valid as others versions of events from Gaza authorities which are in fact Hamas authorities. I waded into this on NewsNation, saying as follows: [click here](#).

"I used to be the Middle East editor of AP in charge of the coverage of the Gaza also. I faced the same criticism and I can tell you isn't easy. I can tell you that the reporters, Palestinian Gazan reporters on the ground, who are living in a police state and have all kinds of pressures on them, are heroes, nothing less than that. That said, I do think the global media, to be true to its status as a public good, if it really wants report the first draft of history and not propaganda, does need to treat with more skepticism any numbers or narratives coming out of Gaza. It is safe to say that territory is ruled by a brutal nihilistic organization that, as it's clearly capable of raping and torturing and burning alive children, probably is not above lying to journalists. And i think that needs to be factored in the way that is perhaps more profound than we've seen from some major news organizations."

## In memory of Claudia DiMartino



A snapshot of Claudia DiMartino in the NY office, circa 2002. Photo by [Neal Ulevich](#).

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[Cliff Schiappa](#) – It was with sadness I read in Monday’s Connecting of Claudia DiMartino’s passing. In life she was so very clear on the precious value of time, family, and friends as she shouldered the weight of health challenges over the past decade.

As colleagues on the LeafDesk Advisory team in the early 90s, our paths would cross periodically at trade conventions, state meetings or at 50 Rock as we worked to convert the newspaper industry from analog to digital handling of photographs. No simple task, but Claudia was one to keep a level head and offer sage advice if it was a

technical issue or logistical conundrum. My only question is why she directed me to Duluth, Minn., in January and New Orleans in August!

In the Connecting story it made mention of how Claudia changed careers early on, not to gather financial riches, but to accumulate experiences through travel, teamwork and friendships. She indeed was rewarded with infinite treasures, first and foremost with Hal as life partners, and the admiration of so many throughout the AP family.

Just a side note, in the photo showing Claudia with Rande Anmuth and a youngster identified as Peter Bragg, it is actually me. Not that I recognize the full-ish head of hair, rather because I remember owning that tie. Nonetheless, it's a great memory from a special time in my career with Claudia.

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**Lindel Hutson** - A sad day to learn that Claudia has died.

She was a bright and charismatic lady with a warm personality. Claudia treated each new face as if it belonged to an old friend.

She had perhaps as much impact on steering America's newspapers into the age of digital photography as did the engineers who counted pixels.

My condolences to Hal and the others who were close to her.

## Burning Man for Nuke Freaks







**Neal Ulevich** - Two days each year Trinity Site in New Mexico opens to thousands fascinated by the place where the first atomic bomb lit up the sky in a predawn test. A similar weapon soon demolished much of Nagasaki.

Trinity Site always draws a crowd, this year more than ever because of the cinema bio epic *Oppenheimer*. One count had about 3,000 visitors, a parade of cars stretching more than a mile when the Stallion Gate opened at 8am October 21. Trinity Site is on the White Sands Missile Range, a military facility normally closed to outsiders.

Bomb makers thought the Hiroshima bomb, a relatively simple design using Uranium, would explode. Some questioned if the more complex Plutonium bomb would work. It did in the predawn darkness of July 16, 1945. A nearly identical bomb was dropped on Japan shortly thereafter.

Inspired by the movie many visitors traveled from distant states just to see Trinity Site (others I spoke with never saw the flick, and a few never heard of the film). The Army, which controls the site, warned that big crowds were expected to tax the remote area near Socorro, New Mexico. But troops efficiently handled the miles long parade to a parking area after a brief security check of each car. A battalion of Porta-Potties stood ready for action.

From there it was a quarter mile walk to the center of the fenced-in site – Ground Zero.

What was there to see? There is a monument. There are the twisted remains of the base of a tower from which the bomb was suspended (the tower was vaporized in the blast).

The organizers also produced a bomb casing similar to the one which held the so-called Fat Man bomb.

Ground Zero was cleaned up after the blast and most of the Trinitite – sand melted into a slightly radioactive jewel-like form – was removed. There is still residual radioactivity at the site but it is very low, somewhat above normal background count.

Everyone I spoke with was drawn by the physical presence of a world changing event. A few wore commemorative T-shirts, some rather kitschy.

Nearby Socorro on I-25 is a small city, nothing special. But there are other attractions in the area. The VLA Radiotelescope, a jaw-dropping collection of huge parabolic antennas set on railroad tracks, is west of Socorro and well worth a visit. Then there is nearby Alamogordo with its groves of pistachio trees and what is said to be the biggest statue of a pistachio on earth (concrete, inedible).

And not far off is Truth or Consequences, the only town named after a television show.

## AP logo sighting? On trip to London



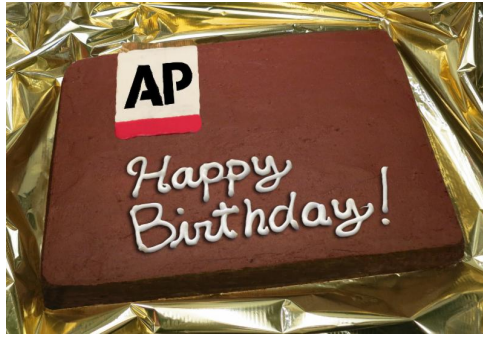
**Ken Giglio** - I have just returned from a weeklong trip to London with my family. We took it as an excuse to see our beloved Baltimore Ravens play the Tennessee Titans at Tottenham Stadium.

One day, while making our way toward the open-air Camden Market, I turned the corner and saw the familiar AP logo directly in front of me. I had, quite by accident, stumbled upon the AP London bureau. So, naturally, I had to pose for a photo!



The second photo is of our whole crew having lunch at fish! in the Borough Market. In addition to me and my wife, Patti; our son Michael and his girlfriend, Kirsten; our son Joseph and his fiancé, Claire, and her sister, Anne.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



## [John Brewer](#)

# Stories of interest

## *Editors' Note: Gaza Hospital Coverage* (New York Times)

By The New York Times

On Oct. 17, The New York Times published news of an explosion at a hospital in Gaza City, leading its coverage with claims by Hamas government officials that an Israeli airstrike was the cause and that hundreds of people were dead or injured. The report included a large headline at the top of The Times's website.

Israel subsequently denied being at fault and blamed an errant rocket launch by the Palestinian faction group Islamic Jihad, which has in turn denied responsibility. American and other international officials have said their evidence indicates that the rocket came from Palestinian fighter positions.

The Times's initial accounts attributed the claim of Israeli responsibility to Palestinian officials, and noted that the Israeli military said it was investigating the blast. However, the early versions of the coverage — and the prominence it received in a headline, news alert and social media channels — relied too heavily on claims by Hamas, and did not make clear that those claims could not immediately be verified. The report left readers with an incorrect impression about what was known and how credible the account was.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt, Robert Reid.

[Behind the Editors' Note on Gaza Hospital Coverage](#) — interview with Joe Kahn, executive editor of The New York Times, on the Times' early coverage of an explosion at a hospital in Gaza City, and where the paper fell short. Shared by Peggy Walsh.

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## *Journalist casualties in the Israel-Gaza conflict*

The Committee to Protect Journalists

The Israel-Gaza conflict has taken a severe toll on journalists since Hamas launched its unprecedented attack against Israel on October 7 and Israel declared war on the militant Palestinian group, launching strikes on the blockaded Gaza Strip.

CPJ is investigating all reports of journalists killed, injured, detained, or missing in the war, including those hurt as hostilities spread to neighboring Lebanon. As of October 24, at least 23 journalists were among more than 6,000 dead on both sides since the war began on October 7.

Journalists in Gaza face particularly high risks as they try to cover the conflict in the face of a ground assault by Israeli troops, devastating Israeli airstrikes, disrupted communications, and extensive power outages. As of October 24:

23 journalists were confirmed dead: 19 Palestinian, 3 Israeli, and 1 Lebanese.

8 journalists were reported injured.

3 journalists were reported missing or detained.

Continued attacks, arrests, threats, and censorship.

CPJ is also investigating numerous unconfirmed reports of other journalists being killed, missing, detained, hurt or threatened, and of damage to media offices and journalists' homes.

"CPJ emphasizes that journalists are civilians doing important work during times of crisis and must not be targeted by warring parties," said Sherif Mansour, CPJ's Middle East and North Africa program coordinator. "Journalists across the region are making great sacrifices to cover this heartbreaking conflict. All parties must take steps to ensure their safety."

The list published here includes names based on information obtained from CPJ's sources in the region and media reports. It is unclear whether all of the journalists were covering the conflict at the time of their deaths, but CPJ has included them in our count as we investigate their circumstances. The list is being updated on a regular basis.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Scripps Howard Fund announces winners of 70th Scripps Howard Awards***

**Press Release | The E.W. Scripps Company**

The journalism produced by the 70th Scripps Howard Award winners spurred action and led to changes across the globe. The Scripps Howard Awards, presented by the Scripps Howard Fund, honor reporting from television stations, networks, radio and podcasts, visual media, online media outlets, independent producers, newspapers and print publications.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Associated Press winners:

Excellence in National/International Investigative Reporting, the Ursula and Gilbert Farfel Prize: FRONTLINE, The Associated Press – ["Putin's Attack on Ukraine: Documenting War Crimes"](#)

Excellence in National/International Video Storytelling, honoring Jack R. Howard: [FRONTLINE, The Associated Press – "Michael Flynn's Holy War"](#)

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## ***'Here is the news. You can't stop us': AI anchor Zae-In grants us an interview*** (Guardian)

By Amelia Tait

From Asia to Europe, AI presenters are now reading the bulletins. They're attractive, ageless and work 24/7 without being paid. Should their human counterparts be worried? And what about the rest of us?

Like most newsreaders, Zae-In wears a microphone pinned to her collar and clutches a stack of notes – but unlike most, her face is entirely fake. A “virtual human” designed by South Korean artificial intelligence company Pulse9, Zae-In spent five months this year reading live news bulletins on national broadcaster SBS. That, you might think, is it then. To adapt the words of another animated newscaster: “I, for one, welcome our new AI overlords.” The future is now. The world belongs to the artificially intelligent and the News at Ten will never be the same again.

Are things really that simple? Since spring, country after country have debuted their first AI news anchor: India has Sana and Lisa, Greece has Hermes, Kuwait has Fedha and Taiwan has Ni Zhen. “She is bright, gorgeous, ageless, tireless and speaks multiple languages, and is totally under my control,” said Kalli Purie, the vice chairperson of the India Today Group, when Sana first appeared in March. For broadcasters, it's easy to see the appeal of AI: virtual presenters can read rolling news for 24 hours unpaid and unfed, and it's unlikely they'll ever skip the queue at a lying-in-state.

Read more [here](#). Shared by John Willis.

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## ***Dozens of Alden-owned newspapers run editorial urging media to call Hamas a terrorist group*** (Axios)

By Sara Fischer

More than five dozen daily newspapers owned by investment firm Alden Global Capital ran an editorial on Wednesday urging the news media to describe Hamas as a

terrorist organization and its Oct. 7 attack on Israel as a terrorist attack.

Why it matters: Some newsrooms that are avoiding the term argue it's become too politicized. Others say the term accurately describes the group and the attack or that avoiding it normalizes Hamas' actions.

Details: The editorials are running across all 65 of the daily newspapers owned by MediaNews Group and Tribune Publishing, two local news companies that are both owned by Alden Global Capital.

Read more [here](#).

## Today in History - Oct. 24, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 24, the 297th day of 2023. There are 68 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 24, 1945, the United Nations officially came into existence as its charter took effect.

### On this date:

In 1537, Jane Seymour, the third wife of England's King Henry VIII, died 12 days after giving birth to Prince Edward, later King Edward VI.

In 1861, the first transcontinental telegraph message was sent by Chief Justice Stephen J. Field of California from San Francisco to President Abraham Lincoln in Washington, D.C., over a line built by the Western Union Telegraph Co.

In 1940, the 40-hour work week went into effect under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

In 1952, Republican presidential candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower declared in Detroit, "I shall go to Korea" as he promised to end the conflict. (He made the visit over a month later.)



In 1962, a naval quarantine of Cuba ordered by President John F. Kennedy went into effect during the missile crisis.

In 1972, Hall of Famer Jackie Robinson, who'd broken Major League Baseball's modern-era color barrier in 1947, died in Stamford, Connecticut, at age 53.

In 1991, "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry died in Santa Monica, California, at age 70.

In 1992, the Toronto Blue Jays became the first non-U.S. team to win the World Series as they defeated the Atlanta Braves in Game 6.

In 1996, TyRon Lewis, 18, a Black motorist, was shot to death by police during a traffic stop in St. Petersburg, Florida; the incident sparked rioting. (Officer James Knight, who said that Lewis had lurched his car at him several times, knocking him onto the hood, was cleared by a grand jury and the Justice Department.)

In 2002, authorities apprehended John Allen Muhammad and teenager Lee Boyd Malvo near Myersville, Maryland, in the Washington-area sniper attacks. (Malvo was later sentenced to life in prison. Muhammad was sentenced to death and executed in 2009.)

In 2005, civil rights icon Rosa Parks died in Detroit at age 92.

In 2012, Hurricane Sandy roared across Jamaica and headed toward Cuba, before descending on the eastern United States.

In 2017, Fats Domino, the rock 'n' roll pioneer whose hits included "Blueberry Hill" and "Ain't That a Shame," died in Louisiana at age 89.

In 2021, heavily protected crews in Washington state worked to destroy the first nest of so-called murder hornets discovered in the United States.

In 2022, actor Leslie Jordan, a comedy and drama standout on TV series including "Will & Grace" and "American Horror Story," died at age 67.

Today's Birthdays: Rock musician Bill Wyman is 87. Actor F. Murray Abraham is 84. Movie director-screenwriter David S. Ward is 78. Actor Kevin Kline is 76. Congressman and former NAACP President Kweisi Mfume (kwah-EE'-see oom-FOO'-may) is 75. Actor Doug Davidson is 69. Actor B.D. Wong is 63. Actor Zahn McClarnon is 57. Singer Michael Trent (Americana duo Shovels & Rope) is 46. Rock musician Ben Gillies (Silverchair) is 44. Singer-actor Monica Arnold is 43. Actor-comedian Casey Wilson is 43. R&B singer, actor and TV personality Adrienne Bailon Houghton is 40. Actor Tim Pocock is 38. R&B singer-rapper-actor Drake is 37. Actor Shenae Grimes is 34. Actor Eliza Taylor is 34. Actor Ashton Sanders (Film: "Moonlight") is 28. Olympic gold medal gymnast Kyla Ross is 27. Actor Hudson Yang is 20.

## 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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