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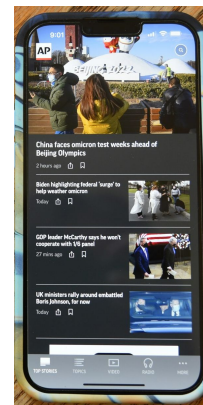
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Connecting

Oct. 25, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this Oct. 25, 2023,

We lead today's Connecting with a thoughtful, and thought-provoking, essay by our colleague **Robert Reid** on journalists' challenges in covering the war in the Middle East.

Bob is editor in chief of Stars and Stripes, a publication he joined after a 45-year career with The Associated Press that included distinguished service in the Middle East, Asia and Europe, and as AP's chief United Nations correspondent.

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

Paul

Here we are in midst of war in Middle East – an opportunity for journalists to do better...or make same mistakes as their predecessors

Robert H. Reid - On the night of March 9-10, 1945, 279 American B-29 bombers dropped 1,665 tons of bombs on Tokyo. They were mostly cluster bombs packed with bomblets that exploded shortly after impact, spewing flaming napalm across densely packed neighborhoods of wood and paper.

The individual fires merged into a giant wall of flame that swept through the city, fanned by wind gusts up to about 30 miles per hour. An estimated 88,000 to 100,000 people died. One million were left homeless.

Britannica defines terrorism as “the calculated use of violence to create a general climate of fear in a population and thereby to bring about a particular political objective.”

Was the architect of the Tokyo firebombing, Gen. Curtis LeMay, a “terrorist”?

Certainly, it was war, and Japan’s treatment of civilians and POWs had been barbaric. Pearl Harbor and Bataan were fresh in American minds. The prospects of tens of thousands of American deaths in an invasion of Japan loomed large.

However, decades after the war, a former LeMay staff officer, ex-Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, said his old boss told aides that “if we’d lost the war, we’d all have been prosecuted as war criminals.”

Back when 9/11 was just a number, most British and American reporters in Muslim countries went to some length to avoid using the word “terrorist.”

Privately, they mocked Israelis who freely used the term, be it in connection with suicide bombings, airline hijackings or ambushes of Israeli soldiers on combat patrols.

However, it’s easy to take the moral high ground when the violence is raging around someone else’s house.

After Sept. 11, 2001, fear, suspicion, and national paranoia swept a shaken nation in ways not seen since the roundup of Japanese-Americans after Pearl Harbor.

During the wars that followed 9/11, the words “terrorist” and “terrorism” burrowed into the U.S. military public affairs lexicon, as well as the pages of American newspapers.

As fear and paranoia gripped the country, one Texas congressman even warned of a Muslim “plot” to send pregnant women to the United States to give birth to “terrorist

babies” who, thanks to the 14th Amendment, could freely move in and out of the country to carry out terror attacks when they became adults.

So here we are in the midst of another war in the Middle East. It’s another opportunity for journalists to do better – or more likely -- to make the same mistakes as their predecessors.

Like many in the news business, I applaud efforts to re-examine how we report “asymmetric wars” and the impact of language on our readers.

There are no easy answers. Is a guerrilla fighter who ambushes soldiers in a contested area a “terrorist.” How does one parse the morality of intent (“We don’t target civilians”) vs. effect (the bomb missed the combatants and killed civilians) ?

The late Gen. LeMay had his own view: "There are no innocent civilians ... you are fighting a people. You are not trying to fight an armed force anymore."

Sorting all this out and reaching a consensus on terminology seem an impossible tasks for organizations that can’t even agree on the spelling of the name of the late Libyan leader Qaddafi/Khadafy/Gadhafi/Kadafi/ or determine when a “president” become a “dictator.”

(We in the AP’s foreign service used to joke that “presidents” were alive but “dictators” were dead)

In the real world, perhaps the only acceptable definition of a terrorist is someone “who does something heinous, cruel, vicious and savage to me and mine.” Or “it depends on whom you talk to.”

Journojive

Adolphe Bernotas - I thought I was mishearing TV anchors mispronouncing “pundit” as “pundint” or “pudent,” until I saw it in print.

Similarly, I wasn't sure I misheard “tenet” mispronounced as “tenant.” But this morning (Oct. 24) tenet-as-tenant has migrated to print.

From one of my local papers reporting Trump signing up to run in the New Hampshire presidential primary:

'With Trump back in office he hopes he can continue to "take on the establishment" and reduce government regulations, which were key tenants of his campaign that appealed to Kirsch.'

Claudia DiMartino and her plastic hammer

Dave Tomlin - She was a smart cookie, and sometimes a tough one. But on many occasions Claudia DiMartino brought the fun. When she was training users on the glitchy new Leafdesks, she kept a battery-powered plastic hammer close by. If

anybody's computer went spasmodic, she'd say, "Oh, a bug!" Then she'd bring the hammer down sharply on the desk which produced a sound like breaking glass. The gag bought her a few minutes to figure out what the trouble was.

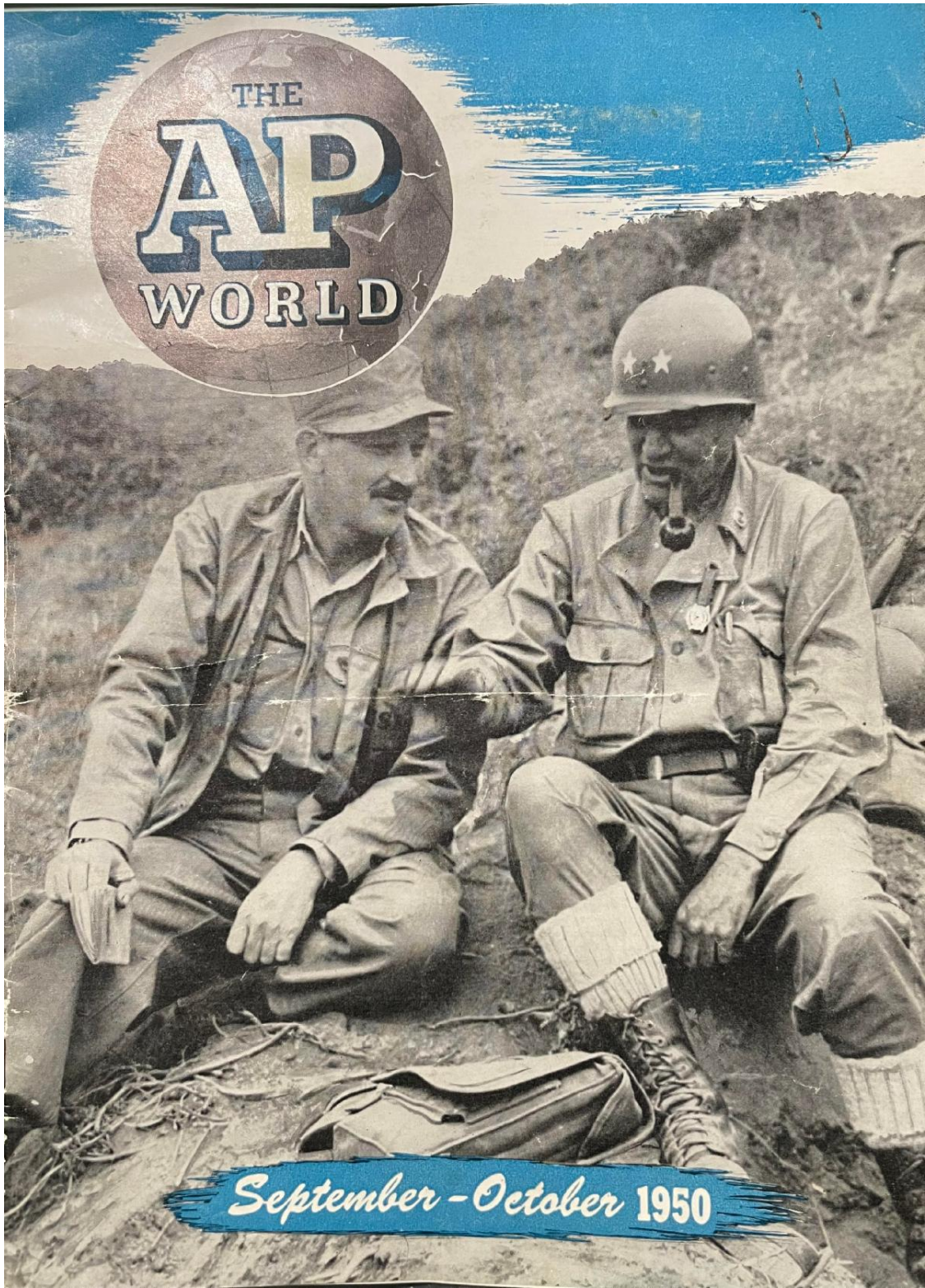
Story behind byline

[D. Byron Yake](#) - I joined the AP in Pittsburgh in 1968. Doug Bailey was the bureau's Correspondent in charge.

It was time to put my byline on a story.

I didn't like the look or sound of "By Byron. . ." so DB and I agreed that "D. Byron Yake" would work. No regrets.

Discoveries from John Barbour's papers... by his daughter



THE AP WORLD

VOLUME V, NUMBER 5
SEPT.-OCT., 1950

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The Cover

Don Whitehead and Maj.-Gen. Frank E. Lowe, President Truman's personal representative, on a hilltop near Seoul. For another "Grandpa" Whitehead item see page 16.

THE AP WORLD, by The Associated Press staff, is issued for staffers and members around the world. Address all communications to Oliver Gramling, Assistant General Manager, The Associated Press, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y., U. S. A.

A SALUTE . . . A Bit of History . . . An Invitation

EXACTLY five years ago, the September-October, 1945, AP WORLD carried KC's salute to the more than 100 Associated Press correspondents who had covered World War II. He spoke to them of ". . . your glorious achievement in reporting the truth exactly as you saw it, whatever the danger."

Again it is fitting—and in another September-October issue—to repeat and underline that salute in addressing it also to those staffers who have covered the war in Korea—a war which at this press time seems near its final stage.

Repetition of the bylines of these correspondents, over front-line stories in hundreds of member papers, and their frequent citations in the weekly logs make it superfluous here to pinpoint individual achievements. Nor would there be space to include such detail on the loyal, persevering and productive performance record typical of the staff.

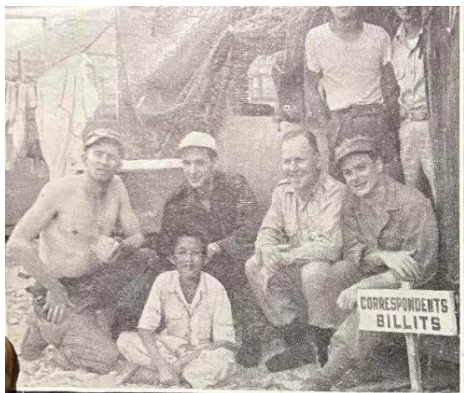
Additionally, this word of appreciation extends not only to the war correspondents and photographers but also to those elsewhere who performed indispensable services—to the desk editors and traffic men, in the bureaus and at listening posts—indeed, to all Associated Press men and women everywhere who have helped to make the Korean war report accurate, comprehensive and speedy.

* * *

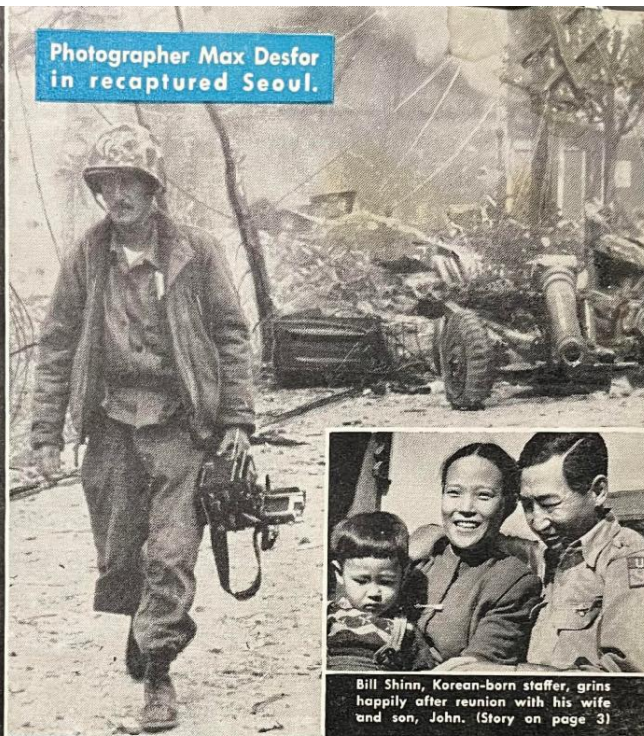
SPEAKING of speed in handling news, there's a pertinent historical item on page 9, column 2, telling how an operator in the Chicago bureau developed the sending "bug."

Here are three shots of typical action in the Tokyo bureau, Far Eastern focal point of Korean war coverage. At left, staffer Don Huth hands a take to a Japanese version of the copy boy, who rushes it to the wireless for relay to the United States. In the center photo, Newsphoto editor Bill Achatz looks over negatives while Japanese photographer Yuichi "Jackson" Ishizaki (left) and Hirohiko Kawai, Japanese dark-room man, wait to process them for radiophoto transmission. In the third picture, Tokyo Chief of Bureau Russell Brines shows staffer Jack Macbeth an area he is to cover. (See back page for other staff pictures.)





Complete with clothes line, southern exposure and house boys is this Korean suburban home of (l. to r.) photographer Jim Pringle and war correspondents William Jordan, Hal Boyle and Stan Swinton.



Photographer Max Desfor in recaptured Seoul.

Bill Shinn, Korean-born staffer, grins happily after reunion with his wife and son, John. (Story on page 3)



Watching the battle from a Yongsan, Korea, hilltop are (l. to r.) staffer Tom Lambert, David Douglas Duncan of Life magazine and General Edward A. Craig.

WAR and Peace in AP's WORLD



In the New York laboratory, engineer Charles Hubley, engineering assistant Joe Yankowski and Carroll Smith (l. to r.) of AP's San Lorenzo listening post study a circuit diagram.



At the Joe Louis-Ezzard Charles fight, New York sports staffer Murray Rose (center) gets pointers from Luis Angel Firpo, who in 1923 knocked Dempsey through the ropes but lost to him anyway.



Los Angeles staffer James Bacon has his pencil ready as gambler Mickey Cohen returns from an encounter with Texas Rangers, who frowned on his visit to their state.



In Rome, staffer George Palmer gets from Representative Thurmond Chatham the story of how he sneaked a jeep ride through the forbidden Soviet sector of Germany.

Jennifer Barbour - Doing taxes, reading by line stories. I came on this old thing from dad's papers and thought you might enjoy it a bit. Looking back to 1950.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jennifer's father John Barbour was one of the finest writers in the AP during his 40-year career. He died in 2004.

Here's to home delivery!





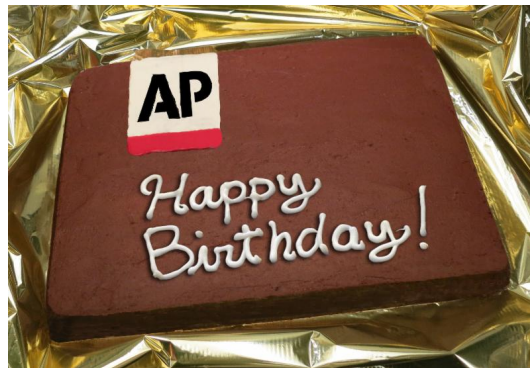
Linda Sargent - Home paper delivery is pretty nice.

Connecting sky shot - Temple, Texas



[Don Cooper](#) - This photo of a "Magenta Sky" over Temple, Texas, taken by my wife, Cindy Cooper, looking east following a rain storm Monday evening.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Marty Thompson](#)

Stories of interest

News outlets backtrack on Gaza blast after relying on Hamas as key source (NPR)

By David Folkenflik

When the fog of war envelops the pursuit of breaking news, the journalism that follows often suffers.

The stakes cannot be higher. The sources can prove unreliable. Concrete facts are often scant. And yet readers reward publications that push out information instantaneously.

The initial coverage of a deadly blast at a Gaza hospital last week offers a fresh reminder of how hard it can be to get the news right — and what happens when it goes awry. The list of those news organizations that fell short is long and illustrious, including The New York Times, the BBC, Reuters, The Associated Press and more.

The news coverage was said to help inspire furious protests across the Middle East that scuttled some of President Biden's efforts at easing tensions through diplomacy. The Israeli government accused the BBC of a "modern blood libel," invoking centuries-old slanders against Jews as killers. That came after the BBC's Jon Donnison told viewers just hours after the incident, "The Israeli military has been contacted for comment and they say they are investigating. But it is hard to see what else this could be, really, given the size of the explosion, other than an Israeli airstrike or several airstrikes."

The BBC later issued a statement citing the full breadth of its coverage but saying that the degree of speculation in his report was, in retrospect, wrong.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mike Holmes, Mark Mittelstadt.

-0-

The New York Times walks back flawed Gaza hospital coverage, but other media outlets remain silent (CNN)

Analysis by Oliver Darcy

Most news organizations seem eager to sweep last week's negligent coverage of the Gaza hospital explosion under the rug, moving on from the low moment covering the Israel-Hamas war without admitting any mistakes.

While The New York Times and BBC — both of which faced enormous scrutiny for their coverage of the blast — have in recent days issued mea culpas, the rest of the press has remained mum, declining to explain to their audiences how they initially got an important story of such great magnitude so wrong.

On Monday, I contacted the major news organizations that amplified Hamas' claims, which immediately assigned blame to Israel for the blast that it said had left hundreds dead. Those organizations included CNN, the Associated Press, Reuters, Al Jazeera, and The Wall Street Journal.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

Meet 'Nashville's Nosiest Bitch'—the Scourge of Corrupt Pols (Daily Beast)

Corbin Bolies

John Oliver praised him as “Nashville’s nosiest bitch.” A far-right mayoral candidate branded him “fake news.” But Phil Williams, chief investigative reporter for Tennessee’s NewsChannel 5, doesn’t care what you call him—as long as you call with tips about liars, frauds, and hypocrites.

“As my general manager points out, if you want to be popular, investigative reporting is not the job for you,” Williams, 62, told The Daily Beast in a Zoom interview last week. “But it’s important work and you just have to take the good with the bad.”

Williams’ national profile has grown exponentially in recent weeks because of his investigation into Alderman Gabrielle Hanson, a far-right candidate for mayor in Franklin, Tennessee, where she’ll face voters on Tuesday. His relentless reporting has uncovered Hanson’s ties to white supremacists; her husband’s Speedo-flaunting—at her alleged behest—at a 2008 pride parade; and her social media photo of a group of “supporters” who have since denounced her and claim they don’t even know her.

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

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Americans are following the news less closely than they used to (Pew Research)

BY NAOMI FORMAN-KATZ

Americans are following the news less closely than they were a few years ago, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis. This comes amid changes in news consumption habits, declining trust in the media and high levels of news fatigue.

In 2016, 51% of U.S. adults said they followed the news all or most of the time. But that share fell to 38% in 2022, the most recent time we asked this question.

In turn, a rising share of Americans say they follow the news only now and then. While 12% of adults said this in 2016, that figure increased to 19% by 2022. And while

5% of adults said in 2016 that they hardly ever follow the news, 9% said the same last year.

Older adults are more likely to say they follow the news all or most of the time, while younger adults are less likely. However, Americans in all age groups have become less likely to say they follow the news all or most of the time since 2016.

Read more [here](#).

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PODCAST: Listen Up - Audio journalists finding new ways to produce, distribute, and monetize their work

(Columbia Journalism Review)

By **EMILY RUSSELL**

This year, after nearly a decade of uninterrupted growth, podcasts hit a ceiling. Ad dollars stopped pouring in. Companies made cuts: Spotify absorbed Gimlet and laid off two hundred of its employees. Sirius XM eliminated nearly five hundred jobs. Malcolm Gladwell's podcasting company, Pushkin Industries, laid off more than a third of its staff. Narrative nonfiction podcasts (costly to produce, difficult to monetize) were impacted the most. Many declared that the audio bubble had burst. Yet others have committed themselves to rethinking their business—and, in fact, podcast audiences are still growing. "The needs of listeners are as strong as ever," George Lavender, an executive at a podcast network called Wondery, said. From Maximum Fun, which went co-op this spring, to local newsrooms with shows in development, audio journalists are finding ways forward.

Listen [here](#).

Today in History - Oct. 25, 2023



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 25, the 298th day of 2023. There are 67 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 25, 1760, Britain's King George III succeeded his late grandfather, George II.

On this date:

In 1859, radical abolitionist John Brown went on trial in Charles Town, Virginia, for his failed raid at Harpers Ferry. (He was convicted and hanged.)

In 1881, artist Pablo Picasso was born in Malaga, Spain.

In 1910, "America the Beautiful," with words by Katharine Lee Bates and music by Samuel A. Ward, was first published.

In 1945, Taiwan became independent of Japanese colonial rule.

In 1960, the Bulova Watch Co. introduced its electronic "Accutron" model.

In 1962, during a meeting of the U.N. Security Council, U.S. Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson II demanded that Soviet Ambassador Valerian Zorin confirm or deny the existence of Soviet-built missile bases in Cuba; Stevenson then presented photographic evidence of the bases to the Council.

In 1971, the U.N. General Assembly voted to admit mainland China and expel Taiwan.

In 1983, a U.S.-led force invaded Grenada at the order of President Ronald Reagan, who said the action was needed to protect U.S. citizens there.

In 1986, in Game 6 of the World Series, the New York Mets rallied for three runs with two outs in the 10th inning, defeating the Boston Red Sox 6-5 and forcing a seventh game; the tie-breaking run scored on Boston first baseman Bill Buckner's error on Mookie Wilson's slow grounder. (The Mets went on to win the Series.)

In 1994, Susan Smith of Union, South Carolina, claimed that a Black carjacker had driven off with her two young sons (Smith later confessed to drowning the children and was convicted of murder).

In 1999, golfer Payne Stewart and five others were killed when their Learjet flew uncontrolled for four hours before crashing in South Dakota; Stewart was 42.

In 2002, Democratic U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone of Minnesota was killed in a plane crash in northern Minnesota along with his wife, daughter and five others, a week and a half before the election.

In 2013, Emmy-winning comic actor Marsha Wallace, known for her roles on sitcoms including "The Bob Newhart Show" and as the voice of teacher Edna Krabappel on "The Simpsons," died at age 70.

In 2022, Rishi Sunak became Britain's first prime minister of color after being chosen to lead a governing Conservative Party.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Marion Ross is 95. Basketball Hall of Famer Bob Knight is 83. Author Anne Tyler is 82. Rock singer Jon Anderson (Yes) is 79. Political strategist James Carville is 79. Singer Taffy Nivert (Starland Vocal Band) is 79. Rock musician Glenn Tipton (Judas Priest) is 76. Actor Brian Kerwin is 74. Actor Mark L. Taylor is 73. Movie director Julian Schnabel is 72. Rock musician Matthias Jabs is 67. Actor Nancy Cartwright (TV: "The Simpsons") is 66. Country singer Mark Miller (Sawyer Brown) is 65. Rock musician Chad Smith (Red Hot Chili Peppers; Chickenfoot) is 62. Actor Tracy Nelson is 60. Actor Michael Boatman is 59. Actor Kevin Michael Richardson is 59. Actor Mathieu Amalric is 58. Singer Speech is 55. Actor-comedian-TV host Samantha Bee is 54. Actor Adam Goldberg is 53. Actor-singer Adam Pascal is 53. Rock musician Ed Robertson (Barenaked Ladies) is 53. Actor Persia White is 53. Country singer Chely (SHEL'-ee) Wright is 53. Actor Leslie Grossman is 52. Violinist Midori is 52. Actor Craig Robinson is 52. Actor Michael Weston is 50. Actor Zachary Knighton is 45. Actor Mariana Klaveno is 44. Actor Mehcad (muh-KAD') Brooks is 43. Actor Josh Henderson is 42. Pop singer Katy Perry is 39. Rock singer Austin Winkler is 39. Singer Ciara is 38. Actor Krista Marie Yu is 35. Actor Rachel Matthews is 30. Actor Conchita Campbell is 28. Major League Baseball outfielder Juan Soto is 25.

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!

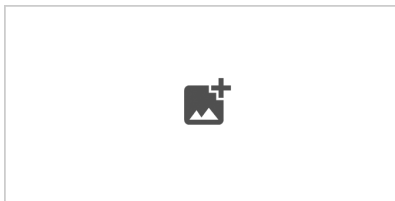
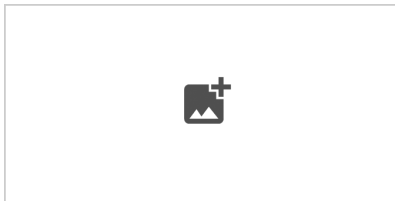
Here are some suggestions:

- **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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