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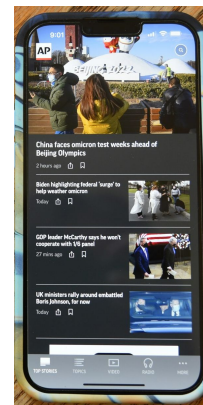
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# Connecting

Oct. 26, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this Oct. 26, 2023,

Family and friends of **Claudia DiMartino** gathered twice in the past two days to say farewell to our beloved colleague, who made her mark with the AP and Bloomberg News during a 30-year career. She died last Saturday at 71.

A visitation and funeral services were held Tuesday in Hicksville, N.Y., with a mass at St. Pius X RC Church. Claudia's niece **Liz Kingsley** hosted an online memorial on Zoom Wednesday evening. (That's Aunt Claudia with Liz in photo at right some years ago.)

Former AP photo director **Santigo Lyon** was among those in attendance and said **Hal Buell**, Claudia's longtime partner and retired AP photo director, was "very pleased to see the contingent from the AP family which included **Valerie Komor, Chuck Zoeller, Brian Horton, Claudia Counts, Suzanne Vlamis, Paul Kazdan and Bernadette Tuazon.**"

Hal was accompanied by his daughter, **Barbara Buell**, from Sunnyvale, California. Also present were Claudia's sister, **Debra Kingsley**, her three nieces **Elizabeth Kingsley,**

**Lauren Van Middlem and Kristina Kingsley and her great-nephew, Carson.**



In her eulogy, Kingsley said: "My aunt loved life and Hal. They were two peas in a pod, birds of a feather, a matching set, the loves of each other's lives. They were together through not only major news events, but also personal triumphs and disappointments. They became like one person and always brought out each other's best side. He was her "hunny."

She added: "My Aunt Claudia was a huge influence in my life. Not only did she teach me, but she showed me the value of hard work and standing up for yourself. I got to see her reach great heights in the media industry, buy her own home, travel the world, and create amazing personal and professional connections - It made me want to do the same. My aunt had a zeal for life and showed that spirit until the very end. I hope to live up to her image of what being an "auntie" truly means. Thank you."

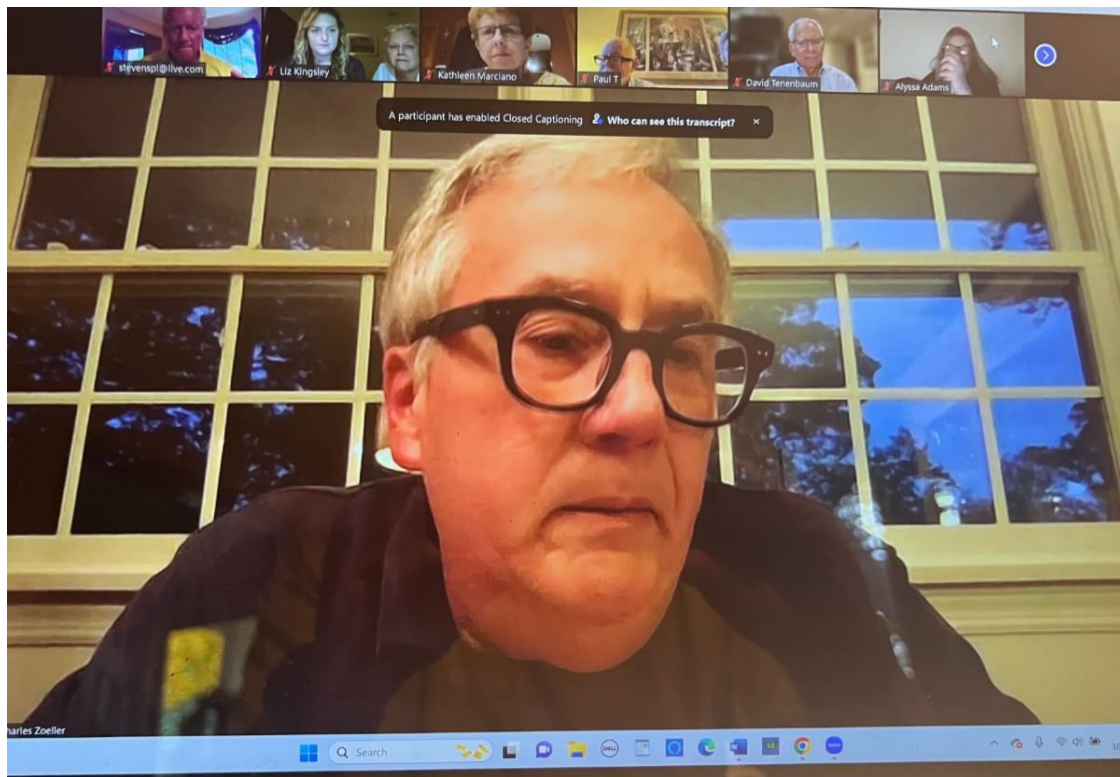
**Elaine Hooker** joined the Zoom meeting despite dealing with covid. "At least I got a few words in. The memorial service was much appreciated for those who could not get to NY."

If you would like to leave an online condolence, click [here](#). Or if you have a memory to share with colleagues, please send it along to me.

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

Paul

## Memories of Claudia DiMartino



**Chuck Zoeller** – *in remarks during Zoom memorial* - I had the good fortune to be hired by Hal for the AP New York photo desk and trained by Claudia.

You couldn't ask to be trained by a better person — Claudia was well-served by her experience as a teacher. She was an excellent communicator, methodical and patient with a rookie photo editor. She also had a sly sense of humor about some of the characters and curiosities of AP work.

She was no pushover though. AP retiree Dave Tomlin accurately observed in Paul Stevens' "Connecting" newsletter that Claudia was a "sharp cookie, and sometimes a tough one." She was professional as they come and not shy about voicing her opinion if she saw something being mishandled.

She was always my friend, but she became a competitor too, when she moved to Bloomberg, a vast enterprise with virtually zero photo presence. She built, from the ground up, a multinational photo service to be reckoned with. I know this because she beat us badly on at least one occasion: I was editing photos for AP on a big story in New York. Claudia and her team were doing the same at Bloomberg. The next

morning Bloomberg's photos were on the front page of the NY Times and the Washington Post. That was good for Claudia, and I probably had some explaining to do at 50 Rock.

That seemed like a big deal in the moment, but of course it's trivial. When I think of Claudia now, I think of the love she had for her family — she spoke of them often, her sister Deborah, her nieces, her in-laws — and of course Hal, the "Love of her Life." If there's a silver lining to this sad week, it's that Claudia brought so many of us together, old friends and new, to celebrate her life.

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**Claude Erbsen** - Claudia DiMartino was a class act in every facet of her life.

At AP she contributed heavily to the successful -- and historic -- shift to digital photography, leading her teams with a steady and thoughtful hand (despite sending Cliff Schiappa to Duluth in the winter).

At Bloomberg she helped create a photo operation from scratch.

In her personal life she was a beacon of light for family and friends, with an incandescent smile even during her long battle against lung disease, a struggle she faced with great dignity and grace.

And she brought happiness and joy to our beloved friend and colleague Hal Buell.

Rest in peace, Claudia!

*Once worked in AP LA bureau*

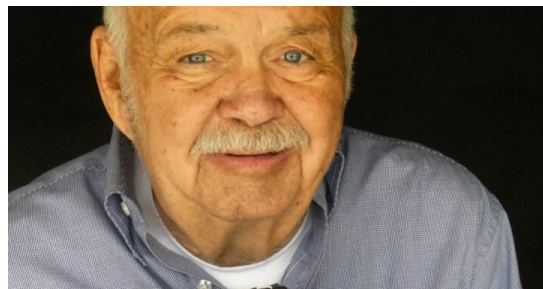
## OC photographer Richard Koehler dies at 82

By Daniel Langhorne

Photojournalist Richard Koehler died at home surrounded by his family on Oct. 12, Costa Mesa police said in a Facebook post. He was 82.

Koehler was a breaking news photographer since the early 1970s, freelancing for the Orange County Register, Los Angeles Times and AP.

He was often the first news photographer at crashes and crime scenes in Costa Mesa or Newport Beach, day or night. He attended high school in Newport Beach and graduated from Orange Coast College.





The Orange County Press Club Board of Directors is mourning our long-time colleague Koehler who worked tirelessly to get the "scoop." He was a frequent recipient of OC Press Club awards, including the 2022 Best News Photo for his image of a fatal crash in Newport Beach.

Click [here](#) for link to this story, shared by Doug Pizac, who said, "I worked many times with him, and against him, when I was at AP-L.A. He was very nice person."

## Carlos Mureithi named Africa climate correspondent

In a memo to staff, Global Climate and Environment News Director Peter Prengaman announced that Carlos Mureithi will join AP as Africa climate correspondent based in Nairobi, Kenya:

Carlos comes to the AP from the Christian Science Monitor, where he covered a wide range of stories as Africa correspondent, from refugees fleeing South Sudan to African animators creating cartoons focused on African kids. Previous positions have included East Africa Editor for the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, East Africa correspondent for Quartz, freelancer for The New York Times and special digital projects editor of Kenya's Daily Nation.

Read more [here](#).

## Stories behind your byline

**Brennan Bryna** - Re Byron Yake's comments on bylines. The editor's note on my first byline from Brasilia read: Bryna Brennan in byline is correct. My former West Virginia bureau chief, John Reid, sent me a copy with the note: "Sometimes she is, sometimes she isn't."

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**Hoyt Harwell** - In the early 1960s an operator (remember them?) dropped the "y" from my name and then I was known in the Atlanta bureau as Hot Harwell.

Fortunately, it never happened again in print.

## Weeping over this willow



[Gary Nyhus](#) - Wind and rain combined to down a 135-year-old, six-story-high willow next to my house in Clear Lake, Iowa. The limb next to my deck weighed 12,000 pounds. Nothing hurt on my property except my pocketbook - \$25k.

## Newspapers in Ramen Shops





[Kevin Walsh](#) - We were having lunch Wednesday at Ramen Haruka in Sapporo, Japan, and were surprised to get a mock newspaper water cup and chopsticks wrapped in paper with an AP story. Turns out [the story](#) was from 1996: Howard University winning a thrilling Heritage Bowl game in Atlanta.

## Stories of interest

## ***Family of Al Jazeera Gaza bureau chief killed in airstrike*** (Washington Post)

By Sammy Westfall and Miriam Berger

Wael al-Dahdouh has been a steady face of wartime news out of Gaza for Al Jazeera Arabic viewers. But on Wednesday night, his work turned personal when he learned that the strikes he had covered from the ground all day had claimed the lives of his wife, teenage son, daughter and grandson, and eight other members of his extended family.

Al Jazeera, the Qatari-owned news channel for which Dahdouh works, said the journalist's family was killed in an Israeli strike on the Nuseirat refugee camp. When asked to comment, the Israeli military said it "targeted Hamas terrorist infrastructure in the area" without providing further details or evidence.

"He reported on that strike earlier, without knowing that some family members were among the dead in that Israeli bombing," Wajd Waqfi, Al Jazeera Arabic's senior White House correspondent, said in a post on the social media platform X.

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

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## ***"Everyone Wants Us to Pick a Side": Reporters Grapple With Covering Israel-Hamas War*** (Hollywood Reporter)

By BRIAN STELTER

Clarissa Ward was about to begin a top-of-the-hour CNN live shot in Sderot, Israel, when a Red Alert siren started to blare. The alert is "telling us to find shelter," Ward said, as her crew hurried toward a bomb shelter. They didn't make it in time. As Hamas rockets whizzed overhead and Israel's Iron Dome intercepted some, creating explosions in the sky, Ward and her colleagues ducked in a ditch. The pulse-pounding scene showed that, as Ward said on air, "even with the most sophisticated military technology, the Israelis are still up against a really tough fight."

The world's biggest news outlets, now in 24/7 war coverage mode, are up against a parallel fight against disinformation and defamation. Reporters say they have never seen it this bad. Ward's compelling Oct. 9 live shot, which should have been a point of pride, prompted weeks of pain. Videos of her report were met with hateful comments calling her an actress. "She deserves an Oscar." "Next time write a better script." Then a click-hungry YouTube creator added an audio track of a faux director giving Ward stage instructions, and the fabricated video went viral on apps like Telegram and Elon Musk's X, with titles like "CNN Busted FAKING Attack in Israel." Musk reacted with a laughing-crying emoji, delighting his fans, and prodding one lone editor at Condé Nast to reply and say what I felt: "None of this is funny," legal affairs editor Luke Zaleski



wrote. "It's tragic. X is a high-speed information-blender puréeing facts and news and minds into mush during major world events. And the effect is massive confusion with potentially disastrous results."

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Opinion: The Palestinian Republic of Fear and Misinformation*** (New York Times)

**By Bret Stephens**

**Opinion Columnist, reporting from Jerusalem**

Many years ago, when I first started covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I got to know a gifted Palestinian journalist who, for reasons that will become apparent in a moment, I'll refer to only by his first name, Said.

As with many other Palestinian journalists, Said's primary source of income was working with foreign reporters as a "fixer," someone who could arrange difficult meetings, translate from Arabic, show you around. Said had an independent streak and he was no fan of Yasir Arafat, which made him particularly helpful in cutting through the Palestinian Authority's propagandistic bombast.

With Said, I interviewed senior Hamas leaders in Gaza, officials in Ramallah, retired terrorists in Nablus, political dissidents in Jenin and construction workers in Hebron. We developed a friendship. Then, shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, he called me in a panic because something I had written in The Wall Street Journal had met with the displeasure of officials in the Palestinian Authority. The goon squad, he said, had paid his family an admonitory visit in their apartment, and he wanted me to take the story down. That was out of the question, I told him. It was never safe for us to work together again.

I mention this anecdote in the wake of last week's sensational story that an Israeli airstrike had killed some 500 people at a Gaza hospital — a story variously attributed to "Palestinian officials," "the Gazan health ministry" and "health authorities in the besieged enclave." The story sparked violent protests throughout the Middle East.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Michael Rubin.

## **Today in History - Oct. 26, 2023**



### By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Oct. 26, the 299th day of 2023. There are 66 days left in the year.

#### Today's Highlight in History:

On October 26th, 2020, Amy Coney Barrett was confirmed to the Supreme Court by a deeply divided Senate, with Republicans overpowering Democrats to install President Donald Trump's nominee days before the election and secure a likely conservative court majority for years to come.

#### On this date:

In 1774, the First Continental Congress adjourned in Philadelphia.

In 1825, the Erie Canal opened in upstate New York, connecting Lake Erie and the Hudson River.

In 1861, the legendary Pony Express officially ceased operations, giving way to the transcontinental telegraph. (The last run of the Pony Express was completed the following month.)

In 1921, the Chicago Theatre, billed as "the Wonder Theatre of the World," first opened.

In 1979, South Korean President Park Chung-hee was shot to death by the head of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, Kim Jae-kyu.

In 1982, the medical drama "St. Elsewhere," which would make stars of Denzel Washington, Mark Harmon and others, premiered on NBC.

In 1984, "Baby Fae," a newborn with a severe heart defect, was given the heart of a baboon in an experimental transplant in Loma Linda, California. (She lived 21 days with the animal heart.)

In 2000, the New York Yankees became the first team in more than a quarter-century to win three straight World Series championships, beating the New York Mets in game five of their "Subway Series."

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed the USA Patriot Act, giving authorities unprecedented ability to search, seize, detain or eavesdrop in their pursuit of possible terrorists.

In 2002, a hostage siege by Chechen rebels at a Moscow theater ended with 129 of the 800-plus captives dead, most from a knockout gas used by Russian special forces who stormed the theater; 41 rebels also died.

In 2010, Iran began loading fuel into the core of its first nuclear power plant.

In 2012, after leaving nearly five dozen people dead in the Caribbean, Hurricane Sandy headed toward the eastern United States, with forecasters warning that it would merge with two winter weather systems to create a mega-storm.

In 2018, federal authorities captured a Florida man with a criminal history and accused him of sending at least 13 mail bombs to prominent Democrats. (Cesar Sayoc was sentenced to 20 years in prison by a judge who concluded that the bombs purposely were not designed to explode.)

In 2021, satirist Mort Sahl, who helped revolutionize stand-up comedy during the Cold War with his running commentary on politicians and current events, died at his California home at the age of 94.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Jaclyn Smith is 78. TV host Pat Sajak is 77. Hillary Rodham Clinton is 76. Musician Bootsy Collins is 72. Actor James Pickens Jr. is 71. Rock musician David Was is 71. Rock musician Keith Strickland (The B-52s) is 70. Actor Lauren Tewes is 70. Actor D.W. Moffett is 69. Actor-singer Rita Wilson is 67. Actor Patrick Breen is 63. Actor Dylan McDermott is 62. Actor Cary Elwes is 61. Singer Natalie Merchant is 60. Actor Steve Valentine is 57. Country singer Keith Urban is 56. Actor Tom Cavanagh is 55. Actor Rosemarie DeWitt is 52. Actor Anthony Rapp is 52. Writer-producer Seth MacFarlane (TV: "Family Guy") is 50. TV news correspondent Paula Faris is 48. Actor Lennon Parham is 48. Actor Florence Kasumba is 47. Actor Hal Ozsan is 47. Actor Jon Heder is 46. Singer Mark Barry (BBMak) is 45. Actor Jonathan Chase is 44. Actor Folake Olowofoyeku (foh-LAH'-kay oh-low-wow-foh-YAY'-koo) is 40. Olympic figure skater Sasha Cohen is 39. Rapper Schoolboy Q is 37. Actor Beulah Koale is 32.

## 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.

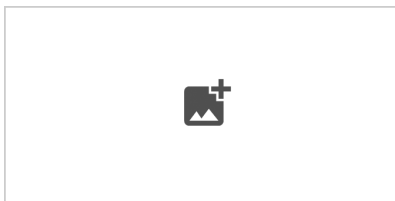
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

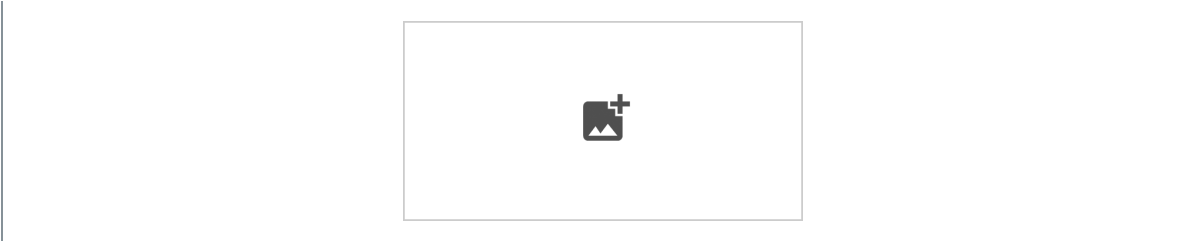
- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

**Paul Stevens**

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