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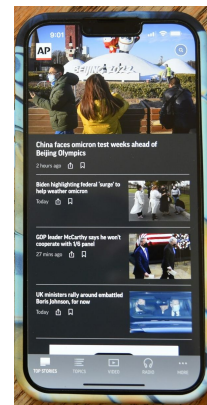
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# Connecting

Nov. 24, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this Nov. 24, 2023,

I hope yours was a happy and blessed Thanksgiving Day.

And what would the Thanksgiving weekend be without a viewing of Les Nessman's account of the WKRP/Cincinnati turkey drop. Click [here](#).

**ROLAND PRINZ DEATH:** Connecting learned from colleague [Robert Reid](#) – “Roland Prinz, long-time reporter in AP’s Vienna, Austria, bureau, died Monday, Nov. 20, at the age of 85. Roland, an accomplished linguist, covered a number of major stories including the Polish labor strikes that helped bring down Communism in Eastern Europe and the wars in the Balkans in the 1990s.”

We will bring you more on Roland and his career when more information is available.

**NOW IT CAN BE TOLD:** From colleague [Ann Blackman](#) – “Lou Boccardi’s delightful piece in last week’s Connecting about his wife Joan having a baby in DC a few hours after dinner at the White House with the Carters mentioned a hospital visitor who whispered to Joan that she was pregnant but it was still a secret. She didn’t want the boss to know! That person was me. Christof Putzel is now 43 and has a 6-month-old son of his own. Where does the time go?”



**TERRY TAYLOR:** Spotted on LinkedIn was a post on our Terry Taylor, by Anthony Edgar, who knew her for years through the International Olympics Committee:

Terry Taylor, the indomitable Sports Editor of the Associated Press from 1992 until 2013, the AP's first female sports editor, member of the IOC Press Commission, passionate Rolling Stones fan, dear friend and colleague, has sadly passed away.

In 2014, Terry did a live hookup with seven IOC Young Reporters attending the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games to discuss how to write an athlete's profile. [Following is the audio of the call](#). I have played it half a dozen times this morning, it is brilliant, and just listening to her, a tear in my eye. She will be missed, by many.

And...today, a very Happy Birthday to my Co-Editor in Life.

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

Paul

## Remembrance of Rosalynn Carter



**Andrew Welsh-Huggins** - The death of Rosalynn Carter brought back memories of a remarkable experience early in my journalism career. My wife and I were living in Providence in 1988 where I was just a few weeks into a freelance writing stint when out of the blue the ProJo hired me to go to the Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York to interview the Carters about their new book, "Everything to Gain," which came out in paperback in September of that year. Nervous as hell (not to mention super green), I dutifully journeyed down on a bus and somehow persuaded my middle brother, Matthew Huggins, who was living and working in New York at the time, to accompany me as my photographer. The Carters couldn't have been nicer or more gracious, though they pretty much ignored my prepared questions in favor of their book spiel—which was understandable since I remember them saying they did about 15 interviews in a row that day. They even helped clean up the mess when one of us accidentally spilled a coke on the suite's coffee table. But the best moment by far, which is now part of family lore, came when President Carter looked at us in our matching suits and said, "Y'all related?"

# Where were you when you heard of JFK's death?



**Doug Kienitz** - November 23, 1963, started out as a somewhat standard day for this new Ensign navigator on active duty in the Navy. It was only earlier in the year that I got my commission and was assigned to the Airborne Early Warning squadron at Barbers Point Naval Air Station in Hawaii.

Our mission was to fly the 14-hour route from the Midway Islands north to the Aleutians and return. The radar operators were watching for any possible incursion of Russian aircraft that may wander toward America.

Our normal flight crew consisted of three pilots, two navigators, two CIC officers along with flight engineers and about eight radar operators.

I was one of two navigators aboard an EC-121K (commonly called a Willie Victor) when word came to our flight crew via a radio transmission from Midway's Navy communications.

"President Kennedy has been shot in Dallas, Texas."

Complete and utter silence overcame our entire crew. Now, what do we do?

It took some time, but orders then came that we would continue on our 14-hour mission. That was done and we eventually landed back on Midway Island - but worried about the unbelievable loss of President Kennedy and how that may affect America.

That flight on November 23 was the quietest of any flight ever. Our flight crew was all in shock.

We still had another week on the island, making seven such roundtrips over a two-week period before returning to Hawaii. While on Midway Island our prime contact was radio; television was not a satellite option.

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**Mark Maassen** - Great newsletter today. I find the coverage of the John F. Kennedy assassination so interesting!

I was five years old, watching TV in the living room of my home. The news of the assassination interrupted the cartoons that I was watching. I went into the kitchen where my mother was making lunch and lamented to her how upset I was that the show was interrupted by "some news about the president being shot."

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**Doug Tucker** - I was taking a freshman English test and it was unseasonably warm in Oklahoma. So the door to the small classroom was slightly ajar. Suddenly the kid nearest the door cried out, shattering the small room's silence.

"Hey! I just heard somebody out in the hall say Kennedy's been shot in Dallas."

Everyone stopped writing and looked around.

The professor, a stuffed-shirt old disciplinarian, said stay in your seats, I'll see what's going on.

Shouting and chaos was growing louder outside.

The prof returned a couple of minutes later with heart-stopping news.

"President Kennedy has been shot. Vice-President Johnson had been shot. The governor of Texas and several senators and congressmen have been shot."

I turned in my unfinished paper and hurried to my dorm, halfway expecting Russian tanks to come rumbling across campus.

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**Jeffrey Ulbrich** - On Nov. 22, 1963, I was in the Army, driving between Fort Benning, Ga., and my new posting with the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kan. En route I stopped for a short visit with my grandfather who lived in southern Illinois. He greeted me at the door with a shaken look and the words: "The president's been shot!" We did not know at that moment whether he was dead or alive and we rushed back inside to sit glued to the television the rest of the day.

Two days later, I was in a Manhattan, Kan., motel room preparing to report in to Fort Riley when I saw Jack Ruby shoot Lee Oswald on live television.

-0-

**Peggy Walsh** - Although it's been 60 years I can still remember exactly where I was when President Kennedy was assassinated.

We had moved from Dallas to Arizona a few years earlier. I hid my treasured Texas necklace after our freshman chorus heard. The school was eerily quiet after the initial gasps and crying.

What I remember most was the day that Oswald was shot. Although he had been working nonstop, Daddy, who had worked for The Dallas Times Herald, and I were watching TV as he took a few hours off.

Daddy said "there's Jack Ruby" just before Ruby lunged forward and shot Oswald. Then he jumped up, called The Phoenix Gazette where he was managing editor and helped them put out an extra with his knowledge of Dallas and Ruby. It turned out Ruby used to come by The Times Herald frequently and was well known.

## The fate of Tarawa's 'hallowed ground'



Tarawa's Red Beach, 2004 (AP Photo)

**Charlie Hanley** – Doug Daniel's great work on combat correspondents with the Marines at Tarawa 80 years ago this week (Nov. 20-21 Connecting) merits this sad postscript:

In the decades after that battle, whose grim cost in American lives made Tarawa a byword for Marine bravery, their Red Beach landing site became a garbage dump.

As I reported in 2004, this historic stretch of sand was covered for several hundred yards with layers of bottles, beer cans, boxes and other household trash of the overcrowded, land-poor islanders. The Kiribati government was searching for solutions, but a quick online search suggests not much progress has been made since then.

In a doubly sad way, it may not matter. The rising waters of global warming are steadily encroaching on Kiribati's atolls and other Pacific islands. The Marines' hallowed ground may disappear, along with the islanders' own hallowed ground of homes and ancestral graveyards. Australia recently agreed to take in climate refugees from drowning Tuvalu. Kiribati has shown interest in a similar deal.

Which raises an interesting question (perhaps some brilliant climate denier out there has the answer): When a Tuvalu or Kiribati becomes an Atlantis, do these landless nations of exiles still get seats at the United Nations?

## Phone booths and covering news

Bruce Lowitt - This isn't about covering a story from a phone booth, except (very) peripherally.

On Dec. 18, 1983, I covered the Los Angeles Rams' game in New Orleans. The Saints were 8-7, tied with the Rams going into the season finale, and a victory would propel the Saints into the postseason.

Shortly before the kickoff, a New Orleans cop showed up at the press box and told us a bomb threat had been phoned into the Louisiana Superdome, packed with more than 70,000 fans. He said they weren't going to try to empty the stadium then but that, as soon as the game ended, everyone would have to evacuate.

The game had a Mardi Gras feel to it, the crowd celebrating a hoped-for victory. The Rams' offense was mediocre - their touchdowns came on a 72-yard punt return and two interception returns - and when the Saints went ahead 24-23 with about four minutes to play and had the ball again, I started writing about the atmosphere. The details of the game would be secondary to the Saints finishing above .500 for the first time - they'd begun play in 1967 - and, more importantly, in the playoffs for the first time.

Meanwhile the Saints had reached the LA 32-yard line and faced fourth-and-three with two minutes remaining. Coach Bum Phillips had three choices - try for the first down (if the Saints made it they could run out the clock; even if they didn't the Rams would be on their 32-yard-line or worse), have second-year place-kicker Morten Andersen try a 49-yard field goal which, if successful, would mean the Rams would need a touchdown to win, or punt, hoping for a "coffin-corner" kick that would bury the Rams near their own goal line.

He punted. The ball bounced into the end zone, giving LA the ball on its 20-yard line. I was still writing.

Then Rams quarterback Vince Ferragamo, who hadn't completed a pass in the second half, hit four in a row, LA drove 55 yards to the New Orleans 25 and Mike Lansford kicked a 42-yard field goal with two seconds remaining.

The Rams won 26-24, the Saints didn't finish over .500, they didn't make the playoffs (the Rams did both) and everything I'd written was useless.

I called NY Sports and began to dictate a story from my game notes when I was tapped on the shoulder. Without looking, I waved the tapper away. Then I was hauled out of my seat by the cop. "Everyone out!" he was ordering. I went back to the AP photo booth behind the press box and banged on the locked door.

"Go away!" a voice said. "I'm busy."

I yelled my name, the door opened, I was pulled in and the door slammed shut. I was in pitch blackness.

"Where's your phone?"

"Feel along the wall to your left," a voice said, "and when you get to the corner it's right around there."

I felt along the wall, found the phone, dialed zero because I couldn't see the numbers or anything else, called collect and dictated a game story from memory, short on details but with the basics.

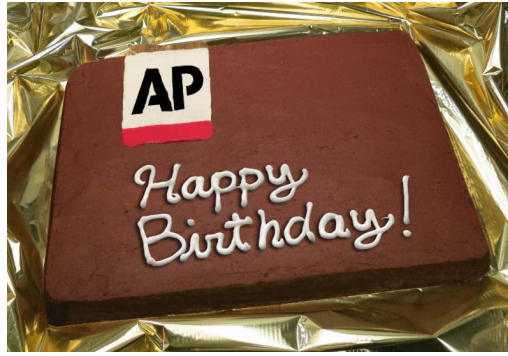
When I got back to NY Sports a day or two later, I found out I had swept the play in the papers AP checked. I felt pretty good about that until I found out that the guy covering the game for UPI didn't have a photo booth behind the press box and that he had left the Superdome along with the 70,000 fans. Good luck finding a phone booth in that crowd.

One final note. When I got home, I told my wife what had happened. Her reply: "YOU HAVE CHILDREN!"

I told her the worst thing would've been if the building had blown up, taking me with it, but the second-worst thing would've been if the building had blown up and I wasn't there to write it, reaffirming in her mind that that's how the mind of a journalist works.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday





[Joe Frazier](#)

[Linda Stevens](#)

*On Saturday to...*

[Oskar Garcia](#)

[Chuck Rice](#)

*On Sunday to...*

[Pierce Lehmbeck](#)

[Bill McCloskey](#)

## Stories of interest

***Why news outlets and the U.N. rely on Gaza Health Ministry for death tolls*** (Washington Post)

By Adam Taylor

Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip have left thousands of people dead, and the toll continues to climb, according to Palestinian health authorities.

The Washington Post, like other news organizations, the United Nations and other international institutions, cannot independently verify death tolls in the war between Israel and Hamas. News reports cite figures released by the Gaza Health Ministry — an agency of the Hamas-controlled government.

Since the Hamas attack Oct. 7 on Israel, Gaza has been closed to outside journalists. Palestinian reporters there are under extreme risk because of the conflict. Israel controls all but one crossing into Gaza, which is controlled by Egypt.

The Gaza Health Ministry on Nov. 10 became unable to continue to release an updated death toll, its spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra told The Post, citing damage to communications infrastructure and intense ground fighting and bombardments that limit access to Gaza's hospitals. On Thursday, the ministry resumed updates, although it said its information remained incomplete.

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

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## ***The drama around a photog's firing*** (Politico)

By LAUREN EGAN, MYAH WARD and BENJAMIN JOHANSEN

The Reuters union is up in arms over the abrupt dismissal of veteran White House photographer JONATHAN ERNST.

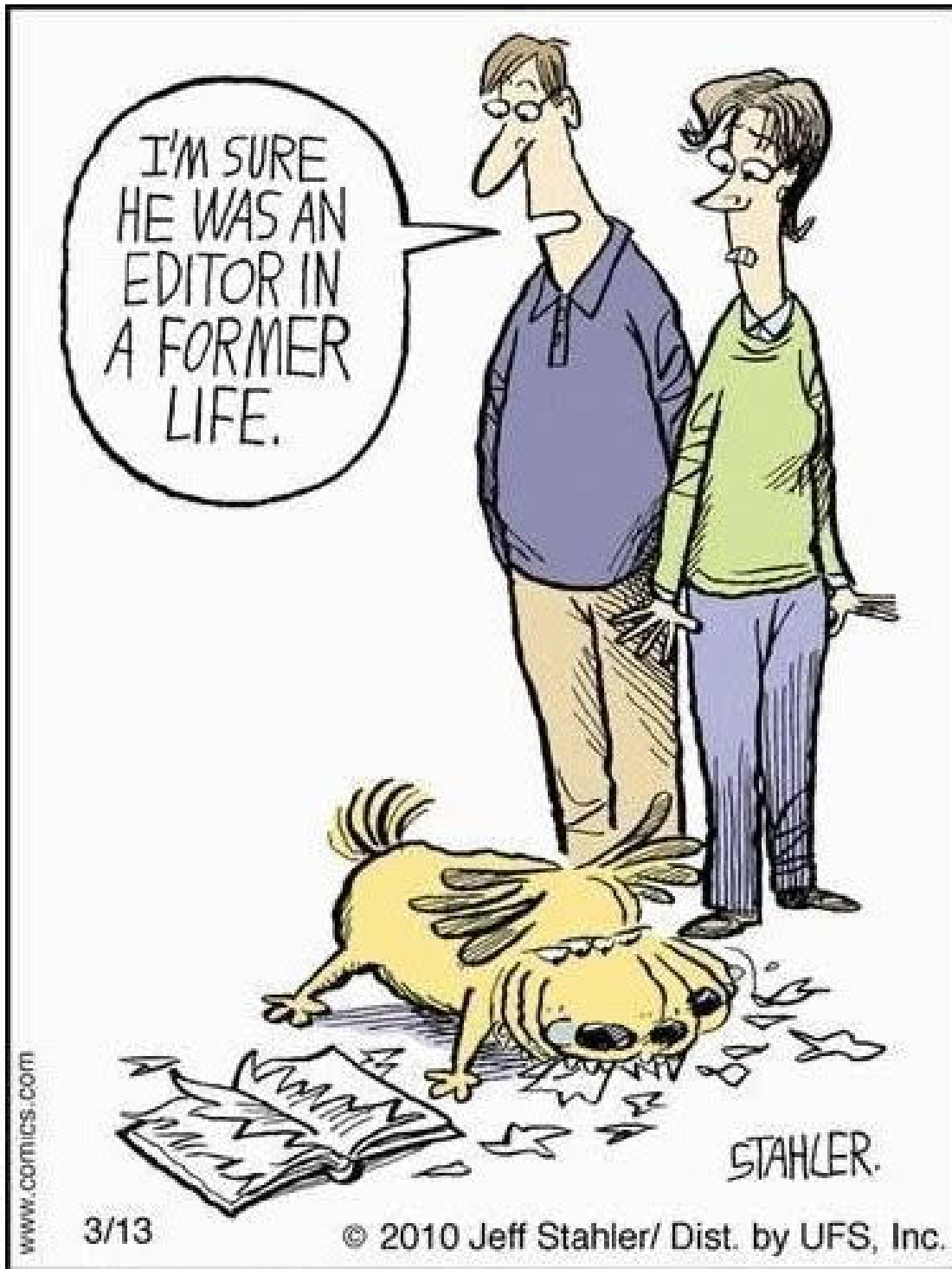
Ernst, who worked nearly 20 years for Reuters as a freelance and staff photographer, was fired Wednesday over Teams due to what management described as "gross neglect of duty" following a heated disagreement with White House press aides.

According to the union, management claimed that Ernst displayed inappropriate behavior on the evening of Oct. 19, after a press wrangler asked him to leave the Oval Office ahead of President JOE BIDEN's prime-time national address on the wars in Israel and Ukraine.

Ernst, the pool photographer on duty that day, pushed back. He had already set up his equipment. And while he could have operated it remotely, as he saw it, there were enormous risks involved with leaving. The Oval Office was packed with staff, reporters and teleprompter and TV equipment. If his camera were to get knocked over or bumped off angle, the entire press corps would be left without a still shot.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac.

## **The Final Word**



Shared by Reed Saxon

## Today in History - Nov. 24, 2023



**Today is Friday, Nov. 24, the 328th day of 2023. There are 37 days left in the year.**

**Today's Highlight in History:**

On Nov. 24, 1963, Jack Ruby shot and mortally wounded Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy, in a scene captured on live television.

**On this date:**

In 1859, British naturalist Charles Darwin published "On the Origin of Species," which explained his theory of evolution by means of natural selection.

In 1865, Mississippi became the first Southern state to enact laws which came to be known as "Black Codes" aimed at limiting the rights of newly freed Blacks; other states of the former Confederacy soon followed.

In 1941, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Edwards v. California*, unanimously struck down a California law prohibiting people from bringing impoverished non-residents into the state.

In 1947, a group of writers, producers and directors, who would become known as the "Hollywood Ten," was cited for contempt of Congress for refusing to answer questions about alleged Communist influence in the movie industry.

In 1971, a hijacker calling himself "Dan Cooper" (but who became popularly known as "D.B. Cooper") parachuted from a Northwest Orient Airlines 727 over the Pacific Northwest after receiving \$200,000 in ransom; his fate remains unknown.

In 1974, the bone fragments of a 3.2 million-year-old hominid were discovered by scientists in Ethiopia; the skeletal remains were nicknamed "Lucy."

In 1987, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed on terms to scrap shorter- and medium-range missiles.

In 1989, Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu (chow-SHES'-koo) was unanimously re-elected Communist Party chief. (Within a month, he was overthrown in a popular uprising and executed.)

In 1991, Queen singer Freddie Mercury died in London at age 45 of AIDS-related pneumonia.

In 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court stepped into the bitter overtime struggle for the White House, agreeing to consider George W. Bush's appeal against the hand recounting of ballots in Florida.

In 2012, fire raced through a garment factory in Bangladesh that supplied major retailers in the West, killing 112 people; an official said many of the victims were trapped because the eight-story building lacked emergency exits.

In 2013, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu harshly condemned the international community's nuclear deal with Iran, calling it a "historic mistake" and saying he was not bound by the agreement.

In 2014, it was announced that a grand jury in St. Louis County, Missouri, had decided against indicting Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson in the death of Michael Brown; the decision enraged protesters who set fire to buildings and cars and looted businesses in the area where Brown had been fatally shot.

In 2017, militants attacked a crowded mosque in Egypt with gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades, killing more than 300 people in the deadliest-ever attack by Islamic extremists in the country.

In 2020, Pennsylvania officials certified Joe Biden as the winner of the presidential vote in the state; the Trump campaign had gone to court trying to prevent the certification.

In 2021, three men were convicted of murder in the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, the Black man who was running through a Georgia subdivision in February 2020 when the white strangers chased him, trapped him on a quiet street and blasted him with a shotgun.

Today's Birthdays: Basketball Hall of Famer Oscar Robertson is 85. Country singer Johnny Carver is 83. Former NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue (TAG'-lee-uh-boo) is 83. Rock drummer Pete Best is 82. Actor-comedian Billy Connolly is 81. Former White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater is 81. Former congressman and Motion Picture Association of America Chairman Dan Glickman is 79. Singer Lee Michaels is 78. Actor Dwight Schultz is 76. Actor Stanley Livingston is 73. Rock musician Clem Burke (Blondie; The Romantics) is 69. Actor/director Ruben Santiago-Hudson is 67. Actor Denise Crosby is 66. U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is 64. Actor Shae D'Lyn is 61. Rock musician John Squire (The Stone Roses) is 61. Rock musician Gary Stonadge (Big Audio) is 61. Actor Conleth Hill is 59. Actor-comedian Brad Sherwood is 59. Actor Garret Dillahunt is 59. Actor-comedian Scott Krinsky is 55. Rock musician Chad Taylor (Live) is 53. Actor Lola Glaudini is 52. Actor Danielle Nicolet is 50. Actor-writer-director-producer Stephen Merchant is 49. Actor Colin Hanks is 46. Actor Katherine Heigl (HY'-guhl) is 45. Actor Sarah Hyland 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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