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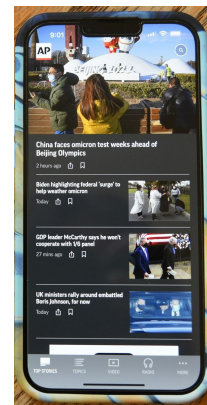
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# Connecting

Nov. 29, 2023

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Colleagues,

Dates for memorial services for two former Associated Press journalists who died in the 10 days have been set.

A memorial celebration for **Karen Ball** will be held Friday, Dec. 8, at 11 a.m. at Kauffman Stadium, home of the Kansas City Royals. (Access Parking Lot M through Gates 1, 6 or 7 and enter the Crown Club through Gate C.) Charitable donations can be made to an endowed scholarship in Karen’s name to support students in financial need with proven hard reporting skills. Checks made payable to the University of Missouri should be sent to: Office of Advancement, Missouri School of Journalism, 103 Neff Hall, Columbia, MO 65211. Please note that your gift is for the Karen Ball Journalism Scholarship.

From an [obituary](#) written by her husband, **David Von Drehle**, deputy opinion editor and columnist for The Washington Post: Karen died Nov. 24 of an apparent pulmonary embolism after years in a wheelchair due to secondary progressive Multiple Sclerosis. She was 62.

A memorial service for AP foreign correspondent **Jennifer Parmelee** will be held on Saturday, Dec. 9, at 1 p.m. at Pumphrey Funeral Homes, 7557 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, MD. (Shared by Carol Williams) Jennifer died Nov. 19.

We lead today's Connecting with a story about Jennifer written by her colleague **Susana Hayward**, a story of bonding and intrigue when the two young AP writers met in Moscow.

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

Paul

## Jennifer Parmelee's life one of adventure, hard work



**Jennifer Parmelee at Red Square.**

[Susana Hayward](#) - I was puzzled that there wasn't an AP obit on Jennifer Parmelee, one of the best writers and correspondents of our foreign service, a woman who fended off a lecherous Muammar Gaddafi inside a tent while covering Libya for us.

Jennifer's life was full of adventure and hard work. She got the story out with flourish no matter what city or country she found herself in, and no matter the obstacles - male or otherwise - for Jennifer was as beautiful as she was smart.



I would like to add my bit to Fran D'Emilio's wonderful remembrance of Jennifer. It is a special story of a lifetime friendship forged decades ago in Moscow, when Jennifer was "kidnapped" and held by the Soviets.

I met her as part of the team that covered the Moscow Summer Olympics in July 1980, the US-boycotted Olympics fraught with politics after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan a year earlier.

Jennifer and I had been assigned to be roommates at the Rossiya Hotel just off Red Square. She had arrived earlier from the AP bureau in Paris, where the multi-lingual Jennifer was a local hire, pretty much fresh out of Princeton.

I'd come to Moscow from the World Desk in New York, part of the sports team that Wick Temple assembled to cover the games. When I got to our room, it was strewn with Jennifer's many clothes, including on top of my bed. I went outside the hall, and inquired, a bit loudly, "Does anyone know Jennifer Parmelee?"

We shared a small room of two-single beds. Neither of us could sleep much because the nights were mostly days in Moscow, the famous white summer nights. That made for long conversations. Everything then was new, exciting, fast-paced. We were young, ambitious and had lots to talk about.



**Susana Hayward, right, and Jennifer Parmelee outside the Rossiya Hotel in Moscow.**

We'd arrived a week or so before the actual Olympics began to help the AP set up for the competition, and in that time, before all hell broke loose for Jennifer, it was as if we'd known each other forever.



In our free time, we roamed Red Square, ate tons of caviar - it was inevitable - and we were conscious of always being followed by KGB agents sent to keep an eye out for the Americans. On our hotel room floor, a "key lady" sat at the end of the hall and kept watch at all hours. Foreigners were prevented from traveling outside of Moscow, but one day, staffers Steve Hurst and Serge Schmemmann smuggled us out in a car miles from the city. We got to see a beautiful green countryside, with its quaint dachas and Russians picnicking - the last nice day we'd have in the Soviet Union.

The games were about to begin. Bureau chief Tom Kent held a meeting and told us newcomers to stay out of politics, to leave that to the bureau writers, and to cover only sports.

Something may have been lost in translation, but rookie Jennifer was assigned to cover the Afghanistan teams. I don't remember which of the teams she covered - there were two, boxing and wrestling, or if she covered the two. Within days, an Afghani team member approached Jennifer to ask for political asylum, and then two, three. In all, five ended up deserting when the games were over.

The U.S. Embassy became involved and there were many meetings with Kent and others. It became a delicate, international incident.

Some of the events are blurry, but here's what I recall. One night, Jennifer and I covered a loud, smoke-filled disco party for the athletes. Bright flashing lights, loud music. Suddenly, a few feet from me, two burly men grab Jennifer by the arms and take her away. It's an image I've never forgotten.

I wasn't privy to the negotiations, but I didn't see Jennifer again until after the games ended and we were on the airport tarmac about to take off, the doors still open but no Jennifer. Minutes go by and finally she enters, sits next to me. The plane is quiet until takeoff. When the wheels lifted the ground, we all broke into loud applause.

Jennifer and I spent a few days in Paris, and a few years later I went to see her when she was assigned to Rome, working with another longtime AP friend, Terry Leonard. We kept in touch on and off as our careers took us to different ports - she to Europe and the Middle East and I to Latin America.

I saw her a few years ago when she'd left journalism and was the spokesperson for the U.N.'s World Food Program in Washington, D.C. We spent the afternoon talking in a park while her two daughters, Serafina and Sophie, played.

Last year, I got a call from Terry Leonard that Jennifer had a rare degenerative neurological disorder - Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, or PSP - and she was in an assisted living facility in Bethesda, Maryland.

Terry, editor of Stars and Stripes, in Washington D.C. would visit Jennifer once or twice a week. He tried to come up with devices and ways she could try to communicate, but it was too hard and frustrating for her. She was trapped in her body, her mind the last to go.

Terry would call me when Jennifer was alert and put me on the phone with her. I'd do most of the talking but I could hear her moan in approval. In her last days, Terry

arranged FaceTime calls so we could see each other. A few days before she died, he put the phone to her face as she laid on her side on a pillow. By then she couldn't lift her head up. Her green eyes smiled at me. I told her I loved her.

## New-member profile: Erik Schelzig

**Erik Schelzig** - I worked for the AP from 2003 until 2018, mostly as a Statehouse reporter in Nashville. I got my start in Miami, where my wife had been hired for her first job out of law school as a public defender. I called around to all the news outlets in South Florida and pretty much got nowhere as soon as hiring managers found out I didn't speak Spanish. But the AP gave me a chance to work as freelancer at baseball games – though the gigs dried up when the Marlins suddenly became good and even went on to win the World Series.



But I did eventually land a temp gig in the bureau. One of my first assignments was to hightail it Key West when a hijacked plane from Cuba landed there. The desk called every 15 minutes or so to ask whether I had arrived yet. When I finally did get there, they said thanks, slapped my byline on the story, and pretty much told me to come on back. This job is going to be easy, I thought. Alas, going forward I would more often than not be on the other end of writing the breaking news stories for no credit!

I ended up getting my first staff gig in the Charleston, W.Va., bureau, where I was placed on the coal and politics beats. About two years later, I transferred to Nashville, where I thought we'd be for another few years before moving on to the next big thing. But 18 years later, we're still here.

I now write a weekly newsletter for political insiders called The Tennessee Journal. In August, Vanderbilt University Press published my first book, "Welcome to Capitol Hill: 50 Years of Scandal in Tennessee Politics." Fittingly, the launch was held in an auditorium beneath the AP's Nashville bureau.

## AP announces staff promotions, hires

**Josh Hoffner, AP US News Director, in a note Tuesday to staff:**

I am thrilled to announce a big batch of recent hires and promotions that we have made in the U.S. over the last few weeks. This group is a mix of outside hires and current AP employees taking on new and elevated roles, and it's especially rewarding to see expanded career pathways take shape for our many talented colleagues. Please join me in congratulating them.

**MARTA CRAVIOTTO:** Marta is the new video manager for Florida and the Deep South. Marta joins the AP from the Miami Herald, where she is the visual innovation editor and manages a staff of visual journalists and editors. Among her many accomplishments at the Herald was leading video coverage of the Surfside condo collapse that was part of the paper's Pulitzer Prize win for Breaking News. She grew up in Spain before coming to the U.S. and earning a master's degree in journalism at Stanford. In her new Miami-based role, she will oversee the video report and manage VJs across Florida and the Deep South. Her first day is Dec. 11.

**GRAHAM LEE BREWER:** Graham is a new race and ethnicity team reporter, joining the AP from NBC News, where he was a national investigative reporter. For two years, he pioneered the network's first and only fulltime beat for the coverage of Indigenous communities and tribal nations. It's no exaggeration to say that Graham is one of the nation's best Indigenous affairs reporters, with more than a decade of journalism experience in a variety of newsroom roles. His journalism about other communities of color has appeared in numerous outlets, including ProPublica, BuzzFeed News, the New York Times and NPR. Graham will be based in Oklahoma City and starts on Dec. 11.

**TERRY TANG:** Terry is also a new race and ethnicity team reporter. But it feels odd saying she is new to the R&E team. Over the last few years, Terry has been among the most consistent contributors to AP's race news coverage. She is widely recognized beyond the AP for producing insightful coverage of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and culture, and for being a go-to for other unique stories on diversity and race. Terry also has a knack for finding fun stories about race and representation, which is an increasingly important part of this beat. She has done that while fulfilling regular duties covering breaking news in the Southwest for more than 18 years. She will still be based in Phoenix and starts on Dec. 11.

**JENNY KANE:** Jenny is the new chief photographer for the Pacific Northwest. Jenny is a longtime photo editor in New York and Washington, D.C., where she has been an absolute pillar of our photo report. She has served as photo editor for the White House, U.S. desk, enterprise and business in her time at AP, with the White House role putting her front and center on some of the biggest stories and images in the world. Her creativity, smarts, collaboration and visual eye have earned her admirers across the AP. Jenny will be based in Portland and start in the new role on Jan. 1.

**SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN:** Susan is the new Chief Correspondent for the Southwest. Susan started with the AP as an intern while a junior in college and hasn't looked back since. As a reporter and correspondent in her native New Mexico, her work has been the gold standard for all-formats breaking news and enterprise coverage for 25 years. Drought, wildfires, immigration, Native American affairs, the Los Alamos Laboratory, oil and gas exploration, climate change, there's really no topic in New Mexico and the Southwest that hasn't mastered in her coverage. She is a skillful writer, reporter, photographer, collaborator and mentor and knows the issues and stories Southwest better than anyone. She will remain based in Albuquerque.

**FREIDA FRISARO:** Freida is the new Chief Correspondent for Florida. Freida has been a mainstay of the AP Florida operation since she started as a reporter in the mid-1990s, covering everything from Bush-Gore to Elian Gonzalez to the Pulse nightclub shooting to the Surfside collapse. She now steps into a larger role in the news report in Florida,



and it's hard to imagine anyone better suited for the new challenge. Freida is beloved and respected by staff in Florida and beyond, and her breaking news chops and eye for colorful only-in-Florida stories have made her a fixture on the wire for many years.

**HANNAH SCHOENBAUM:** After 18 impressive months as a Report for America journalist in North Carolina, Hannah is moving to a permanent role as a reporter in Salt Lake City. Her time in North Carolina has put her at the middle of practically every dominant theme in the news in America in 2023: partisan politics, abortion, transgender rights, education, guns, to name a few. She has brought a tenacity and curiosity to every story she has pursued all while enlivening the coverage with strong visuals and diverse voices. Earlier this year, Hannah won a prestigious award for emerging journalists at the Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists convention.

**NICK PERRY:** Nick is making the long move from New Zealand to New England, where he will be a reporter for the team there. Nick has worked as AP's correspondent covering New Zealand and the South Pacific for the past 12 years. During that time, he covered New Zealand's worst mass shooting, a deadly volcanic eruption and wildfires in Australia. He followed the political fortunes of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and the effects of climate change on everything from farming to skiing. This year he wrote a series of investigative stories about concerns over sexual violence at McMurdo Station, the U.S. research base in Antarctica.

**SCOTT MCFETRIDGE:** Scott is the new Midwest Correspondent. Scott has been in this role for more than two months now, and we have already seen his imprint on the news report in this large territory spanning from North Dakota to Missouri. Scott has a reputation for running stories with a calm, steady hand and uncovering off-beat stories and elevating them for a global audience. His expertise on agriculture and the lottery is legendary by now, as evidenced by every time a lotto jackpot approached a billion dollars.

**CLAIRE RUSH:** Claire is another highly talented Report for America journalist who will be joining the AP in a permanent role. The world saw Claire's talents in action during the Maui wildfire, where she was part of the AP team that was inside the burn zone in the aftermath of the inferno and she delivered several memorable pieces of journalism. Her talents extend well beyond that story, however. She has reported on legislative walkouts, abortion rights, homelessness and breaking news stories like the arrest of an airline pilot who almost brought down a jet from the cockpit. Her video skills have grown with each assignment and she is now regularly shooting video during her assignments. She will remain based in Oregon.

**ISABELLA VOLMERT:** Isabella has joined the AP as a temporary reporter in Indianapolis. Isabella joins the AP from the Dallas Morning News, where she was a breaking news fellow. She developed a beat covering religion in the Dallas area and she has already been a regular fixture on the wire in her month on the job, including how a school board race in an Indianapolis suburb exploded into a larger debate.

Please join me in offering this group a heartfelt congratulations.

## Connecting sky shot – South Carolina



**Norman Black** - On a cool November day, walking to Kiawah Beach in South Carolina.

## Breaking the ice

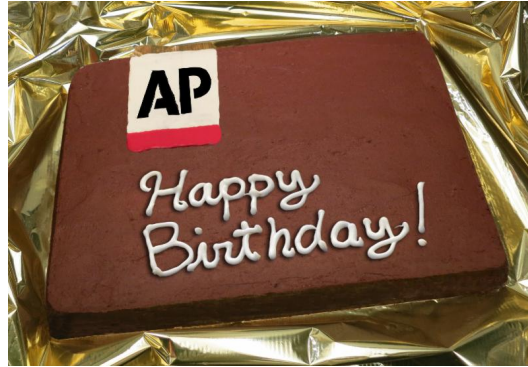




**Paul Stevens** – For years, I’ve carried in the trunk of my car a hard-plastic plate that once graced the front of an AP Teletype printer – for occasions just like this when winter showed up in the Kansas City area earlier in the week. No manufactured ice scraper is more effective getting ice off the windows than this. Now if I were smart enough to market i..



# Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Jim Sterling](#)

## Stories of interest

### *Sports Illustrated is the latest media company damaged by an AI experiment gone wrong* (AP)

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — Computer-generated writers ... writing computer-generated stories?

Sports Illustrated is the latest media company to see its reputation damaged by being less than forthcoming — if not outright dishonest — about who or what is writing its stories at the dawn of the artificial intelligence age.

The once-powerful publication said it was firing a company that produced articles for its website written under the byline of authors who apparently don't exist. But it denied a published report that stories themselves were written by an artificial intelligence tool.

Earlier this year, experiments with AI went awry at both the Gannett newspaper chain and the CNET technology website. Many companies are testing the new technology at a time when human workers fear it could cost jobs. But the process is fraught in journalism, which builds and markets its values-based products around the notions of truth and transparency.

While there's nothing wrong in media companies experimenting with artificial intelligence, "the mistake is in trying to hide it, and in doing it poorly," said Tom Rosenstiel, a University of Maryland professor who teaches journalism ethics.

"If you want to be in the truth-telling business, which journalists claim they do, you shouldn't tell lies," Rosenstiel said. "A secret is a form of lying."

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

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## ***Russia extends detention of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich*** (Washington Post)

By Robyn Dixon

RIGA, Latvia — A Moscow court on Tuesday extended the detention of the Wall Street Journal journalist Evan Gershkovich until at least Jan. 30, prolonging his imprisonment since March on charges of spying, which he, his employer and the State Department forcefully deny.

It is the third time Gershkovich's detention has been extended since Federal Security Service (FSB) agents seized him from a restaurant in Yekaterinburg, a city in the Urals where he was on a reporting trip. Gershkovich then was flown to Moscow and has been in Lefortovo high security prison since.

Gershkovich, 32, held Russian Foreign Ministry accreditation to work as a reporter in Russia, but Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova swiftly condemned the reporter just hours after his arrest, claiming without evidence that his activities were "not related to journalism."

Read more [here](#).

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## ***High school reporters' solution-oriented cure for bad news burnout*** (Washington Post)

Perspective by Courtland Milloy

The high school journalists had produced excellent reports on health, wealth and poverty in the D.C. area. In addition to writing for their school newspapers, they also participated in a nonprofit journalism training program called Youthcast Media Group, which provided mentoring and helped students get their work published in major newspapers.

I met some of the students during a YMG fundraiser in McLean earlier this month. They were smart, caring, curious and eager to experience the world, not just watch it go by on digital screens. They were just the kind of budding reporters our nation's troubled news business needs. Except they weren't quite ready to commit to journalism as a career path.

This was more than youthful indecision. They had given the matter serious thought.

“Initially, I wanted to pursue health-policy journalism, but I also see myself trying to make policy changes,” said Sarah Gandluri, who attends Our Lady of Good Counsel High School in Olney. At YMG, she learned to amplify the voices of those who too often suffer in silence, such as a story she co-wrote with fellow student Sydney Johnson about the efforts of homeless LGBTQ youths to find shelter during the coronavirus pandemic.

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

## Today in History - Nov. 29, 2023



Today is Wednesday, Nov. 29, the 333rd day of 2023. There are 32 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 29, 1981, film star Natalie Wood drowned at age 43 while boating off California's Santa Catalina Island with her actor husband Robert Wagner and actor Christopher Walken.

### On this date:

In 1864, a Colorado militia killed at least 150 peaceful Cheyenne Indians in the Sand Creek Massacre.

In 1910, British explorer Robert F. Scott's ship Terra Nova set sail from New Zealand, carrying Scott's expedition on its ultimately futile — as well as fatal — race to reach the South Pole first.

In 1924, Italian composer Giacomo Puccini died in Brussels before he could complete his opera "Turandot." (It was finished by Franco Alfano.)

In 1929, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Richard E. Byrd, pilot Bernt Balchen, radio operator Harold Gatty and photographer Ashley McKinney made the first airplane flight over the South Pole.

In 1947, the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the partitioning of Palestine between Arabs and Jews; 33 members, including the United States, voted in



favor of the resolution, 13 voted against while 10 abstained. (The plan, rejected by the Arabs, was never implemented.)

In 1961, Enos the chimp was launched from Cape Canaveral aboard the Mercury-Atlas 5 spacecraft, which orbited earth twice before returning.

In 1963, President Lyndon B. Johnson named a commission headed by Earl Warren to investigate the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

In 1986, actor Cary Grant died in Davenport, Iowa, at age 82.

In 1987, a Korean Air 707 jetliner en route from Abu Dhabi to Bangkok was destroyed by a bomb planted by North Korean agents with the loss of all 115 people aboard.

In 2001, former Beatle George Harrison died in Los Angeles following a battle with cancer; he was 58.

In 2008, Indian commandos killed the last remaining gunmen holed up at a luxury Mumbai hotel, ending a 60-hour rampage through India's financial capital by suspected Pakistani-based militants that killed 166 people.

In 2012, the United Nations voted overwhelmingly to recognize a Palestinian state, a vote that came exactly 65 years after the General Assembly adopted a plan to divide Palestine into separate states for Jews and Arabs. (The 2012 vote was 138 in favor; nine members, including the United States, voted against and 41 abstained.)

In 2013, a police helicopter crashed onto a pub in Glasgow, Scotland, killing 10 people.

In 2017, "Today" host Matt Lauer was fired for what NBC called "inappropriate sexual behavior" with a colleague; a published report accused him of crude and habitual misconduct with women around the office.

In 2018, in a surprise guilty plea, former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen confessed that he lied to Congress about a Moscow real estate deal he pursued on Trump's behalf during the 2016 campaign.

In 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that New York City would reopen its school system to in-person learning, and increase the number of days a week many children attend class, even as the coronavirus pandemic intensified in the city.

In 2021, a federal judge blocked the Biden administration from enforcing a coronavirus vaccine mandate on thousands of health care workers in 10 states that had brought the first legal challenge against the requirement.

In 2022, Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes was convicted of seditious conspiracy for a violent plot to overturn Democrat Joe Biden's presidential win, handing the Justice Department a major victory in its massive prosecution of the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection.

Today's Birthdays: Blues singer-musician John Mayall is 90. Actor Diane Ladd is 88. Songwriter Mark James is 83. Composer-musician Chuck Mangione is 83. Pop singer-

musician Felix Cavaliere (The Rascals) is 81. Former Olympic skier Suzy Chaffee is 77. Actor Jeff Fahey is 71. Movie director Joel Coen is 69. Actor-comedian-celebrity judge Howie Mandel is 68. Former Homeland Security Director Janet Napolitano is 66. Former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel is 64. Actor Cathy Moriarty is 63. Actor Kim Delaney is 62. Actor Andrew McCarthy is 61. Actor Don Cheadle is 59. Actor-producer Neill Barry is 58. Pop singer Jonathan Knight (New Kids on the Block) is 55. Rock musician Martin Carr (Boo Radleys) is 55. Actor Jennifer Elise Cox is 54. Baseball Hall of Famer Mariano Rivera is 54. Actor Larry Joe Campbell is 53. Rock musician Frank Delgado (Deftones) is 53. Actor Paola Turbay is 53. Contemporary Christian singer Crowder is 52. Actor Gena Lee Nolin is 52. Actor Brian Baumgartner is 51. Actor Julian Ovenden is 48. Actor Anna (AH'-nuh) Faris is 47. Gospel singer James Fortune is 46. Actor Lauren German is 45. Rapper The Game is 44. Actor Janina Gavankar is 43. Rock musician Ringo Garza is 42. Actor-comedian John Milhiser is 42. Actor Lucas Black is 41. NFL quarterback Russell Wilson is 35. Actor Diego Boneta is 33. Actor Lovie Simone (TV: "Greenleaf") 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.



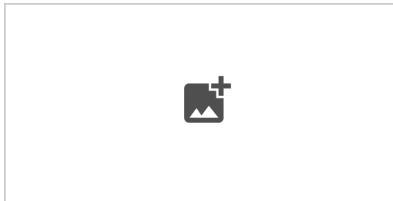
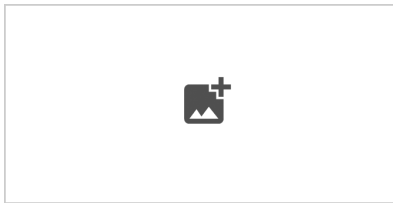
Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

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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