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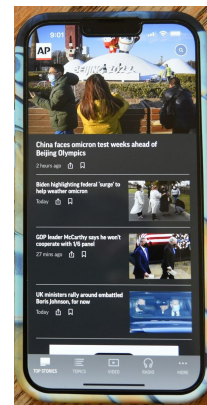
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Connecting

Jan. 4, 2024

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this Jan. 4, 2024,

“Remember me and smile, for it's better to forget than to remember me and cry.”
Dr. Seuss

We remember in today’s Connecting the colleagues we have lost over the past year.

As I read through the list of names, I feel a mixture of sorrow for their deaths and of gratitude for the privilege of knowing many of them and appreciating the impact they had on my life – and The Associated Press. I’m guessing you might have that same reaction – and if you feel moved to share a word or two about anyone on the list, please send it along.

This listing of names comes from 2023 issues of this newsletter and a listing from the Employee Benefits department of AP Human Resources by our colleague **Ronnie Klar**,

senior retirement analyst. Some of those listed were journalists were Connecting readers who did not work for the AP but were close to our news cooperative.

Among the names is that of **Anthony Dominick Benedetto**. At the age of 14 or 15, this son of Italian immigrants dropped out of school to help his family make ends meet and worked as a copy boy at AP's headquarters at 50 Rockefeller Plaza before he was drafted into the Army in 1944 during World War II.



He survived the war and would one day become one of the most famous singers of all time – **Tony Bennett**. He died July 21, 2023, at the age of 96. At the start of the listing of names, we borrow a few words from his classic "I Remember You" and provide an audio link to the song.

Be safe, stay healthy and live this day your given to your fullest.

Paul

AP



*'When my life is through
And the angels ask me to recall the thrill of them all
Then I shall tell them, I remember you'*

--Tony Bennett, ["I Remember You"](#)

Elise Amendola

Craig Ammerman

Felix Bae

Woody Baird

Karen Ball

Moustafa Bassiouni

Anthony Dominick Benedetto

Del Brinkman

James Butterworth

Valiant Corley

Jim Cour

Dennis D'Agostino

Donald Dashiell

Don Deibler

Claudia DiMartino

Otto Doelling

Joe Edwards

Marian Fox (Green)

Denne Freeman

George Gedda

Mark Gillispie

Ivy Gormican

Loyal Gould

Jerry Green

Patrick Hamilton

George Hanna

George Harris

Darin Henderson

Jerry Henkel

Fred Hoffman

Kit Kincade

Larry Knutson

John Kuzniewski

Gene Lahammer

Robert MacDonald

Julia Martinez

Clarice Maue

Margaret McEntee

Christopher Miniclier

Sam Montello

Ray Newton

Chris O'Hearn

Harold Olmos

Jennifer Parmelee

Russ Percival

Ray Pike

Charlie Price

Roland Prinz

Carmine Ricciardi

Rose Ann Robertson

Jack Smith

Jack Stokes

Terry Taylor

Mike Tharp

John Van Gieson

Edelmire Ramos Vasquez

Denny Vohar

Jane See White

George Wilbur

Arnold Zeitlin

David Zimmerman

Yaniv Zohar

Spouses of AP Retirees

Barbara Arrants

Kathleen Besch

Helen Bradis

Catherine Bradshaw

Joanne Brown

Claire Castells

Debra Corder

Dorothy Graham

Marles Nicholls

Hollace Olan

Jeanne O'Mally

Joann Ramirez

Bernice Rappoport

Juliann Savage

Phyllis Steede

Ruth Strode

Jillian Treuthardt

Janet Wise

-30-

Connecting mailbox

On the death of Arnold Zeitlin

[Hal Spencer](#) - I was sad to read of Arnold Zeitlin's death. I worked with him at the Boston Bureau in the early 80s, and his avuncular advice to a young reporter stuck.

One time he edited my lengthy description of Caligula down to "Caligula was a madman who ruled Rome..." (a story about authorities blocking the showing of the film "Caligula" in Boston.) Another time he taught me that a very small dead body under a blanket cannot be assumed to be a child, especially after a fire (a story about a fiery commuter plane crash on a Rhode Island lake.) What an agency man he was.

-0-

Retirement of Jim Baltzelle

Brent Kallestad - Jim Baltzelle was CoB in Miami during my last several years at AP and highly regarded by the troops. I stayed a couple of extra years in part due to Jim's leadership during a period of internal change (buyouts, etc.) within AP.

-0-

Starting the new year

Jim Bagby - What a way to start the new Connecting year! Beautiful and newsworthy photos, including award-winning Nick Ut on the job; a gathering of AP eagles in LA (speaking of Ut), and resolutions from the ageless Norm Abelson that should inspire us to light a candle for many more years of Connecting contributions from him.

-0-

Greens and bringing luck in the new year



Ed Williams - I hope that the owner of this turnip and mustard greens patch in the Pine Hill community in east Alabama was blessed with good luck, good health, and prosperity for his generosity.

Thanks to former student Vanessa Sorrell Burnside for sharing the great photo that ran in her newspaper, the weekly Randolph Leader in Roanoke, Alabama. It pops up in my Facebook memories each year on this day.

The woman picking greens for her family's New Year's dinner was Vernelle Billingsley of Wedowee.

I don't know about other parts of the country, but New Year's Day meal traditions in the South are believed to bring good luck. That means black-eyed peas, greens and cornbread. Each food has a significance of good luck, wealth, health and happiness but I can't remember which represented what.

It's Time for America to Go Back to Afghanistan

By **Kathy Gannon**

Guest Essay in Wednesday's New York Times

Ms. Gannon is a Canadian journalist who covered Afghanistan and Pakistan for 34 years for The Associated Press.

It's striking how much Afghanistan, which has the unfortunate legacy of being the site of America's longest war, has all but disappeared from public discussion in the United States. But perhaps it's understandable. After all, there always seems to be another conflict, another war — which, as it happens, is also Afghanistan's history.

Since 1979, Afghans have lived in almost perpetual conflict. Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes or their country. Foreign interventions have come and gone, ending in failure, leaving Afghans and their neighbors to live with the consequences.

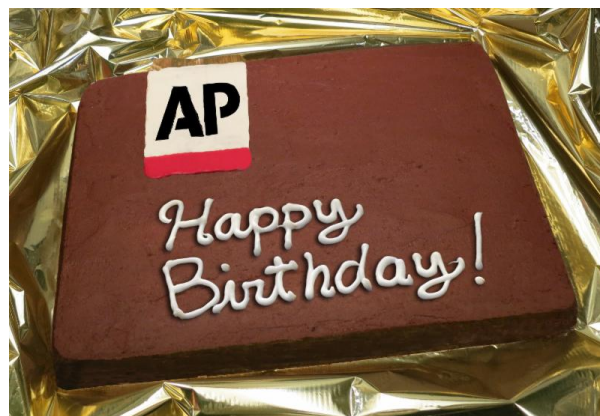
Today, America's longest war is over. The U.S. Embassy in Kabul sits empty, a daily reminder of how America has sought to isolate Afghanistan since the U.S. military's withdrawal in 2021. Washington has done so in an effort to pressure the ruling Taliban to moderate its views, including committing to women's rights, expanding the government to non-Taliban members and addressing human rights abuses.

That tactic backfired the first time the group was in power. And vacant Western embassies aren't going to get girls back to school or increase women's participation in the work force. Instead, isolating the Taliban has served only to isolate Afghans, leaving many of them feeling alone and, worse, helpless.

It's time to accept that past policies have failed and that the United States and its allies must change course and commit to greater engagement, which would in turn bring a better understanding of the realities in Afghanistan. Along with the large amount of humanitarian aid Washington provides, it's time for America to return to Afghanistan and the 40 million people who live there. Washington should reopen its embassy in Kabul and commit to engaging with Afghans across society. Afghans need to know that the United States and others are there and that they can be depended upon.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Michael Rubin, Lou Boccardi, Hank Ackerman.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Eddie Frerks](#)

[Noreen Gillespie](#)

[Dan George](#)

Stories of interest

'Astounding': AP Absolutely Blistered Over Story Blaming Harvard President's Plagiarism Scandal On Conservatives Pouncing (MEDIAite)

Caleb HoweJan

The Associated Press did not commit plagiarism but certainly stuck with a tried-and-true framing this week in an article since updated and hit with a community note that argued the resignation of Harvard President Claudine Gay is really a story about conservatives pouncing.

In an article by reporters Collin Binkley and Moriah Balingit published Wednesday, the AP reported that, although Harvard found "multiple shortcomings in Gay's academic citations," and "duplicative language," and despite the fact that "American higher education has long viewed plagiarism as a cardinal sin," the problem here is that it wasn't peers who noticed Gay's violations but "her political foes."

"Many academics were troubled with how the plagiarism came to light: as part of a coordinated campaign to discredit Gay and force her from office, in part because of her involvement in efforts for racial justice on campus," they wrote.

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

-0-

The Messenger Plans Layoffs Amid Hunt for Cash (New York Times)

By Benjamin Mullin

The Messenger, a digital news start-up that launched last year with big ambitions, will cut about two dozen employees this week as it faces dwindling cash reserves, according to a person with knowledge of the decision.

The employees are expected to be laid off this week as part of a cost-cutting measure, said the person, who would speak only anonymously because the staff had not yet

been notified. The company is facing financial headwinds in a tough digital ad market that have put a squeeze on its operations, the person said.

In a statement, The Messenger said it was “in the midst of a second-round raise,” but the company declined to provide specifics on the amount of money it was seeking. The statement did not mention the layoffs.

The Messenger has roughly 300 employees and publishes articles on politics, culture and general-interest news.

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

Today in History - Jan. 4, 2024



Today is Thursday, Jan. 4, the fourth day of 2024. There are 362 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 4, 2007, Nancy Pelosi was elected the first female speaker of the House as Democrats took control of Congress.

On this date:

In 1821, the first native-born American saint, Elizabeth Ann Seton, died in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his State of the Union address, called for legislation to provide assistance for the jobless, elderly, impoverished children and the disabled.

In 1948, Burma (now called Myanmar) became independent of British rule.

In 1964, Pope Paul VI began a visit to the Holy Land, the first papal pilgrimage of its kind.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson delivered his State of the Union address in which he outlined the goals of his “Great Society.”

In 1974, President Richard Nixon refused to hand over tape recordings and documents subpoenaed by the Senate Watergate Committee.

In 1987, 16 people were killed when an Amtrak train bound from Washington, D.C., to Boston collided with Conrail locomotives that had crossed into its path from a side track in Chase, Maryland.

In 1990, Charles Stuart, who'd claimed that he'd been wounded and his pregnant wife fatally shot by a robber, leapt to his death off a Boston bridge after he himself became a suspect.

In 1999, Europe's new currency, the euro, got off to a strong start on its first trading day, rising against the dollar on world currency markets.

In 2002, Sgt. 1st Class Nathan Ross Chapman, a U.S. Army Special Forces soldier, was killed by small-arms fire during an ambush in eastern Afghanistan; he was the first American military death from enemy fire in the war against terrorism.

In 2006, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffered a significant stroke; his official powers were transferred to his deputy, Ehud Olmert (EH'-hood OHL'-murt). (Sharon remained in a coma until his death in January 2014.)

In 2015, Pope Francis named 156 new cardinals, selecting them from 14 countries, including far-flung corners of the world, to reflect the diversity of the Roman Catholic church and its growth in places like Asia and Africa.

In 2018, the Trump administration moved to vastly expand offshore drilling from the Atlantic to the Arctic oceans with a five-year plan that would open up federal waters off of California for the first time in decades and possibly open new areas of oil and gas exploration along the East Coast.

In 2023, Rick Singer, the mastermind of a nationwide college admissions bribery scandal, was sentenced to 3 ½ years in prison and ordered to pay \$19 million after helping authorities secure the convictions of a slew of wealthy parents involved in his scheme to rig the selection process at top-tier schools.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Barbara Rush is 97. Actor Dyan Cannon is 85. Author-historian Doris Kearns Goodwin is 81. Country singer Kathy Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 70. Actor Ann Magnuson is 69. Rock musician Bernard Sumner (New Order, Joy Division) is 69. Country singer Patty Loveless is 67. Rock singer Michael Stipe is 64. Actor Patrick Cassidy is 62. Actor Dave Foley is 61. Actor Dot Jones is 60. Actor Rick Hearst is 59. Singer-musician Cait O'Riordan is 59. Actor Julia Ormond is 59. Former tennis player Guy Forget (ghee fohr-ZHAY') is 59. Country singer Deana Carter is 58. Rock musician Benjamin Darvill (Crash Test Dummies) is 57. Actor Josh Stamberg is 54. Actor Damon Gupton is 51. Actor-singer Jill Marie Jones is 49. Actor D'Arcy Carden is 44. Christian rock singer Spencer Chamberlain (Underoath) is 41. Actor Lenora Crichlow is 39. Comedian-actor Charlyne Yi is 38. MLB All-Star Kris Bryant is 31. Actor-singer Coco Jones is 26.

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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