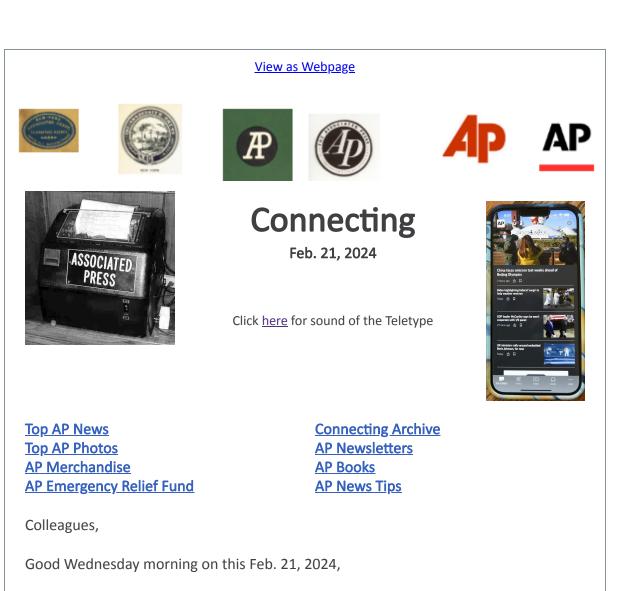
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Congratulations are in order for **<u>Bob Jablon</u>**, a Los Angeles AP newsman for more than four decades, on his retirement Tuesday.

As noted in our lead story, Bob and his wife Susan are retiring to live in France.

We bring you first responses from our call for your stories on jury duty. Hope you will share your own. And...if you have never been called to serve, any idea why not?

**WRONG LINK**: In Tuesday's Connecting, I provided the wrong link to this story: Exclusive: Navalny's Letters from the Gulag | The Free Press. The correct link can be found <u>here</u>.

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

Paul

# Bob Jablon retires after 42 years with AP's Los Angeles bureau



Photo by Richard Vogel/AP

<u>Andrew Dalton</u> - <u>Bob Jablon</u> was celebrated and sent into retirement Tuesday by colleagues after 42 years, all of them in the Los Angeles bureau of the AP.

"I spent my entire career in Los Angeles. Why go elsewhere when all the news comes and goes from here?" Jablon said in a farewell email. "When I started in 1982, chattering teletypes brought AP light to, as the saying goes, all the corners of the globe. Nowadays it's satellites in real time."

As a reporter and night supervisor, Jablon brought his sharp journalist's chops to countless wildfires, earthquakes, shootings and famous deaths.

At the goodbye gathering, his longtime editor Frank Baker said that for news coverage from California, Jablon was both "Mr. Irreverent," and "Mr. Indispensable." He was busy with breaking news through his final day, Friday, when he reported and wrote an urgent series on a home explosion.

Jablon will now retire to France with his wife, Susan, where she once worked and has many friends.

### Your stories of jury duty callup

<u>Dodi Fromson</u> - I was called up some years ago for Superior Court jury duty. As we had lived overseas, now back in the States, this would be my first time. It was a murder case involving a gun. The prosecutor, when interviewing me for the final cut, asked if that was objectionable to me or did I have any conflicts. Well, I responded, I do contribute to "Women Against Gun Violence."

End of jury duty.

-0-

**Bill Kaczor** - I not only served on a jury, I wrote a first-person account of how it went in November 1980, about 10 months after I was hired by The Associated Press. It was a civil case in state Circuit Court in Tallahassee. The plaintiffs were a teenager and his mother. Robert Loudamy was 14 when he broke his neck after jumping off a rope swing into shallow water three years before the trial. It left him paralyzed from the neck down except for enough motion in his arms and fingers to operate a motorized wheelchair. Robert and his mother, who became his full-time caretaker, sued the state of Florida because the accident happened when he attended an environmental camp at a state forest while being supervised by two counselors, Backed up by a Florida State University swimming coach who testified as an expert witness, their lawyer argued the state was at fault for allowing such a dangerous activity. The state's lawyers pinned the blame on Robert, contending he disobeyed a counselor's instructions by failing to let go of the rope until it had swung back over shallow water. Here's how I led off the story:

"In his opening remarks one of the lawyers jokingly warned our six-member jury that the case we were about to decide would be nothing like Perry Mason. It sounded trite, but it was more true than I had expected despite some experience in covering trials and appeal courts."

I went on to note that Mason won cases by exposing witnesses who told lies and "smoking gun" evidence. Then I wrote: "But what happens when there is no 'smoking gun' and all the witnesses are telling the truth?"

The other jurors were a semi-retired auto dealership manager, a cabinetmaker, an ice cream parlor clerk, a college student and an unemployed store clerk; two were women. Two were Black. They elected me as their foreman, I suspect it was because I was the only one in a coat and tie.

I reported that our verdict was a compromise. First, we decided Robert was 65 percent to blame and the state 35 percent.at fault. I had asked each juror to suggest a split. They ranged from 90-10 in favor of the state to 70-30 in favor of Robert. My recollection is I leaned most heavily in Robert's favor, but the other jurors were much less sympathetic. "We had been instructed to base our decision on the evidence, but there wasn't any evidence on how much common sense a 14-year-old boy should have," I wrote. The average of the proposed splits was 63-39, but after some haggling settled on 65-35. We next decided how much he should receive for "pain and suffering," lost wages and other damages. One thing that weighed against Robert was his intelligence. He was a top student so we reasoned that he could use that intelligence to earn a living despite his handicap.

When we turned to deciding how much his mother should be compensated, one of the women said she should get nothing because it was her duty to take care of her child. The juror relented after admitting she wouldn't give up her career to devote the rest of her life to taking care of a paralyzed family member. We also added expenses for future medical treatment and hiring other people to help take care of him in a verdict totaling \$1.5 million against the state. I ended my story: "I left the courtroom confident justice had been done as best we could do it but wishing my next trial would be a Perry Mason rerun."

That, though, was not the end of the story. Florida law then limited verdicts against the state to no more than \$50,000 per person. Robert and his mother each received that amount. To get the rest they had to seek passage of a claims bill in the state Legislature, which also has the power to change the amount of the verdict. Lawmakers the following passed their claims bill, but for only \$499,770 in addition to the \$100,000 already paid out -- less than half of our verdict. I might have been allowed on the jury, but I had to recuse myself from AP's coverage of the claims bill.

I hadn't thought much about my juror experience until getting this Connecting assignment, so I did a Google search for Robert. Sadly, the first thing that turned up was his brief obituary. Robert died in Tampa at the age of 41 on Nov. 13, 2004, almost exactly 24 years after the trial. The obituary did little more than list his survivors (parents, stepparents and two sisters) except for this sentence: "He was known for his generous heart, many friends and love of music." It did not indicate an occupation or how he died, but I have to believe his injuries were at least a contributing factor. I also found a brief newspaper article published a year and two days after my trial story saying that Robert had graduated from high school in Tavares, Florida, and planned to study business and computer science at a community college with help from his state settlement. The only other thing I found was a report that indicated he was part owner of a CB radio shop that apparently went out of business in 1990.

As for my hope that my next trial would be more like a Perry Mason rerun, that wish was fulfilled many times over, but only in my capacity as a reporter. I was called for jury duty three more times but never selected. I was eliminated from a federal court trial in Pensacola after telling the judge that I knew a state legislator and a prominent lawyer who were listed as potential witnesses. I narrowly avoided a lengthy civil trial involving Walmart in Tallahassee that I really wanted to avoid because it was in the midst of a legislative session. The Walmart lawyer seemed to like me, but I was excused only after noting I was a staunch union member and took a dim view of anti-union Walmart, although I admitted to shopping there. The final jury summons came after I was retired and ready and willing, but I was excused before jury selection began.

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**Doug Pizac** - Back in the late '80s I was pegged for jury duty by the Los Angeles County court system in the eastern section. I asked one of my AP colleagues if they have ever been on a jury and what did they do. One told me when asked if you could view the defendant as innocent until proven guilty he said to reply "If he was guilty he wouldn't have been arrested" which would do to get him excused. I didn't do that.

Instead, I was upfront and said I was with AP thinking that would boot me in itself. Wrong; I was selected. One or two years later I was pegged again for duty and said the same thing and was selected again. This time though the prosecutor was the same one from my first trial. Afterwards, I asked him why he would want me on the jury what with my job involves. His reply caught me off guard. He said I was chosen because he knew my journalism background would let me see through all the bullshit thrown around by both sides.

And I agreed with him. I did see the BS. In the first trial he won. In the second he lost.

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<u>Charlotte Porter</u> - I was on jury duty on a sunny day in Manhattan when the Challenger blew up. It would've been the biggest bulletin of my career. But John Daniszewski handled it with aplomb.

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Jeff Rowe - To the dismay of my editors over the years, I've been a juror five times -four criminal cases and one civil. If being a journalist was an issue, none of the lawyers brought it up during juror questioning and I didn't have any qualms about obeying the judge's admonition not to do any outside research on a case while serving. In deliberations after we jurors had been given the case, we did discuss some of what Steve Paulson mentioned -- why certain evidence was or was not presented, the judge's management of the trial and the demeanor of the lawyers, witnesses and defendant or civil plaintiff. We also see who shows up to watch the case; in a memorable occasion, a couple pushing an infant in a stroller arrived as spectators one day while court was in session. The relationship had been characterized very differently the prior day in court.

After my third or fourth trial, I shared an elevator ride with one of the lawyers and asked him if my observation was correct -- that jurors who have served multiple times are chosen faster and with noticeably fewer questions than are asked of first-time jurors.

Big smile from the lawyer who said that yes, lawyers generally ask fewer questions of veteran jurors and want them on their trial. "We figure you've already been vetted by other lawyers in those previous trials," he said.

# **Memories of John Hotard**

**Jeff Rowe** - I didn't know John Hotard the AP writer but I did speak many times over several years with John when he was the American Airlines spokesman and I was covering airlines for the Orange County Register. John never mentioned that he was an AP vet but he quickly ascended to my top tier of spokespeople -- he always was accessible, knowledgeable, concise, and professional in every way. I remember wishing he could convene a public relations seminar for some of the other company and organizational PR folks I dealt with who didn't share John's good qualities, all of which, I now know, were a reflection of his AP training.

# OU, Post alum (and former AP Tel Aviv, Tallahassee newsman) Ken Klein to sign off



By Abby Jenkins The Post, Ohio University

Ohio University's theme, "Forever Ohio," can mean many things to different people. To alums, it often means an eternal place of memories they will cherish and an invisible string that will forever tie them to the place that nurtured them into the workplace. Ken Klein definitely took this mindset to heart.

Klein, OU class of 1976, has dedicated both the years of his life at OU and the years after to feats in the journalism world and sharing the accomplishments of others.

"Achievement should be celebrated," Klein said. "There's plenty of achievement that should be spotlighted. Sharing information about others creates community and alumni engagement and a continued connection to Ohio University after people leave."

Klein spent the latter half of his time on campus at The Post, planting his roots in his future of journalism. Klein reminisced about the differences with the paper now.

"We put out a print paper five days a week," he said. "In those days, we had to drive to a print press in Logan to get the thing printed and then drive back in the wee hours of the morning. So there's hands-on production, different than the sort of digital age today." Klein additionally met his wife, Susan DeFord, class of 1976, at OU and together they had three sons; the youngest plans on getting married this year.

Just before getting his bachelor's in journalism, Klein enrolled in a foreign internship program that would soon become one of the key moments during his time as a Bobcat. He worked for The Associated Press in Tel Aviv, Israel, and described it as an amazing experience.

"For the AP in Tel Aviv, these people were like NBA All-Stars in journalism," he said, laughing. "They were trilingual ... they're fast. And I just had never seen anything like that firsthand."

Klein went on to work for Gannett-owned News-Press in Fort Myers, Florida, and The Associated Press in Tallahassee, Florida. Afterward, he went to work in Washington D.C. to work for congressional staff and a trade association.

While Klein traveled far and wide for his exceptional work in his field, his ties to OU never faded. His work as a research assistant and his social media series gave him a reputation and a name Scripps students have come to know and love: "KenSharesScripps."

"There's endless content available," Klein said. "People said, 'Well, you're going to run out of content by three days out. You won't have anything to say.' We never ran out of content."

After his retirement in 2021, Klein devoted more time to celebrating students' work across social media. At one point, Klein was posting content seven days a week across Instagram, Threads, X (formerly known as Twitter) and LinkedIn.

"My interest was to celebrate student, alumni (and) faculty success, to keep Athens on the map and to share information to a large community," he said.

Klein's series is coming to a close after his knee replacement surgery happened Jan. 31. His recovery protocol and disciplined physical therapy program call for his attention instead. Despite this, his love for student and alumni accomplishments continues to flourish. Klein plans to travel once he's healed and attend his son's destination wedding.

Learning through his experiences in and out of OU, Klein advises everyone to get out of their comfort zone and get hands-on experience. Using a sports metaphor, he said to get better, one has to compete with players on a higher level.

Students and alums alike are sad to see "KenSharesScripps" logging off, but the effects of his time spent advocating for the accomplishments of others will remain as well as the advice he has to offer to those looking to follow his path of success.

"Recognize that, you know, change is inevitable," Klein said. "But disruption also creates opportunity."

Click <u>here</u> for link to this story. Ken is a Connecting colleague and can be reached <u>here</u>. (Shared by Dan Sewell)

### Newspaper Hat -- In Barcelona, Spain!



<u>Kevin Walsh</u> - We spotted this recently during the kickoff to Carnaval week in Barcelona.

And if anyone needs a refresher on how to make a newspaper hat, <u>here</u> is a tutorial on four different styles from wikiHow.

# **Connecting wishes Happy Birthday**



Susan Clark

Mark Duncan

Lew Wheaton

# **Stories of interest**

Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich to remain in Russian prison until at least March 30(Fox News)



Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich appears in a Russian court in Moscow on Tuesday. (Moscow City Court via AP)

### By Hanna Panreck

A Russian court upheld the imprisonment of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich on Tuesday and rejected his latest appeal, meaning the journalist will remain in Russian prison until at least March 30, the Journal reported.

Russia seized Gershkovich on March 29, 2023, while he was reporting in Yekaterinburg, and accused him of espionage. Gershkovich, the U.S. government and the Wall Street Journal all deny the spying charges, and he's been declared wrongfully detained by the Biden administration. He has been denied all his appeals and faces a likely conviction.

"Evan Gershkovich appeared in the Moscow City Court today, where an appeal of his wrongful detention was denied once again," the Journal said in a statement. "It's been nearly one year since Evan's unjust arrest for doing nothing more than his job, and every day he remains in prison is an unconscionable attack on a free press. Evan is a journalist, and any suggestion or portrayal otherwise is fiction. We continue to demand his immediate release."

Read more <u>here</u>.

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A reporter investigated neo-Nazis. Then they came to his house in masks. (Washington Post)

### By Will Sommer

Jordan Green reports on extremists for the news website Raw Story, where his stories have included alleged neo-Nazis joining the U.S. military or protesting at drag shows. For the past few months, he has worked on an investigation into a teenage gang that local police had linked to a spate of racist vandalism, including a brick attack on a Jewish center in Pensacola, Fla.

As Green prepared to publish his story, neo-Nazis came to his house.

Green's reporting had found that the Pensacola gang was part of a larger online network known as 2119 Blood and Soil Crew, with members operating in several states. On Feb. 10, five people connected to 2119 appeared outside his home in Greensboro, N.C., according to Green, as well as photos the group itself shared on social media.

Some wore skull face masks, a common accessory for violent neo-Nazi groups, according to the photos they posted on Telegram, a social media messaging app popular with far-right extremists. One had a shirt with a skull and a message praising the Einsatzkommando, German death squads in the Holocaust. Another held a sign aimed at Green: "Freedom of press does not equal freedom from consequences."

Read more <u>here</u>. Shared by Dennis Conrad, Michael Rubin.

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### "We've really worked hard not to ever have a pivot at The New York Times": A.G. Sulzberger on Al, local news, and that Trump bump (Nieman Reports)

### **By JOSHUA BENTON**

Men named Arthur Sulzberger have tended to take over The New York Times at points of transition.

Arthur Ochs Sulzberger became publisher in June 1963, just after the conclusion of 114-day printers' strike that had kept all seven of New York's daily newspapers from printing. The strike had been directly responsible for Sulzberger's ascent, at age 37, to the position; the Times' previous publisher had been his brother-in-law, Orvil Dryfoos, but the stress of the job led him to be hospitalized just days after the strike's conclusion. He died of heart failure at age 50.

Those months without newspapers had changed the media landscape like few before it, spawning new competitors and strengthening news rivals in television and radio. It accelerated a host of changes already underway.

Increased labor costs led the Times to double its newsstand price when it started up the presses again, but it came out of the strike relatively well positioned. The same could not be said for its rivals: The New York Daily Mirror shut down in October, and

the New York Journal-American, New York World-Telegram, and New York Herald Tribune each struggled on until merging in 1966 and shutting down a few months later. A seven-newspaper city was suddenly left with just three — and the Times had, not for the last time, somehow navigated an industry disruption and come out stronger.

Arthur's son, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, Jr., took over as publisher in January 1992. At the time, he had no way of knowing that, five months earlier, a man in Switzerland had posted the first public description of his new project, which he called WorldWideWeb.

Read more <u>here</u>. Shared by Lou Boccardi.

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# Top 25 US newspaper circulations: Largest print titles fall 14% in year to March 2023 (Press Gazette)

### By Aisha Majid

The circulations of the largest US newspapers fell 14% in the year to March 2023, according to new figures shared with Press Gazette.

Combined average daily print circulation of the 25 biggest dailies was 2.6 million in the year to March, compared to 3 million the year before, according to data from the Alliance for Audited Media.

News Corp's business-focused The Wall Street Journal (609,654) and The New York Times (296,329) remain the biggest dailies in the US.

Jeff Bezos' Washington Post climbed one place in the ranking to third place (139,232), while News Corp-owned New York Post, which proved to be one of the US's most resilient papers during the pandemic, took fourth spot (135,983). The title, which has successively climbed up recent rankings, saw the smallest year-on-year circulation drop among the top ten papers (7%).

Gannett's USA Today, which was ranked third in our last ranking in 2022, fell to fifth place with a circulation of 132,641 (down 17% year-on-year). Prior to the pandemic the paper's circulation was 486,579. The title has not bounced back from the pandemic's hit to sales to hotels, which would provide free copies to guests.

Read more here.

# The Final Word

### Why skipping your dog's walk is a bigger deal than

you think (Washington Post)

### By Kelly Conaboy

My landlord recently installed a fence around the shared front yard of our building in Upstate New York. Each of her tenants has a dog, and she thought it would be nice to provide a safe off-leash space where they can run around and chase a ball. But this act of kindness has introduced an unfortunate new temptation. When it's time for one of my dog's three daily walks and the weather is bad, or I'm particularly busy (or particularly lazy), I now sometimes think: "Maybe I'll just let him into the yard?"

Of course, I'm happy to have a place to let him out for quick pee breaks. But I fear falling into a pattern of regularly skipping walks. Research indicates that many humans do: A 2011 study from Michigan State University on the benefits of dog-walking found only two-thirds of its subjects routinely walked their dogs. According to experts, this forgoing of walks doesn't only make neurotic dog guardians like myself feel guilty. It can significantly affect your dog's emotional and physical well-being.

"First of all, dogs don't exercise by themselves, for the most part," says Stephanie Borns-Weil, an assistant clinical professor at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University. The amount of exercise a dog needs varies based on age, breed and health — it can be as little as 30 minutes a day or as much as a few hours — but virtually all dogs need exercise in some form.

The typical yard, Borns-Weil says, just doesn't offer enough stimulation to prompt an adequate amount of movement. Unless you're spending time playing with your dog, "they're just going to sit there," she says, "because the space is familiar." She compared it to reading the same book over and over again, or seeking enrichment by hanging out in your bathroom.

Read more <u>here</u>. Shared by Ollie Stevens.

# Today in History - Feb. 21, 2024



Today is Wednesday, Feb. 21, the 52nd day of 2024. There are 314 days left in the year.

Today's highlight

On Feb. 21, 1965, minister and civil rights activist Malcolm X, 39, was shot to death inside Harlem's Audubon Ballroom in New York. (Three men identified as members of the Nation of Islam were convicted of murder and imprisoned; all were eventually paroled. The convictions of two of the men were dismissed in November 2021; prosecutors said new evidence had undermined the case against them.)

#### On this date

In 1437, James I, King of Scots, was assassinated; his 6-year-old son succeeded him as James II.

In 1885, the Washington Monument was dedicated.

In 1911, composer Gustav Mahler, despite a fever, conducted the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall in what turned out to be his final concert (he died the following May).

In 1964, the first shipment of U.S. wheat purchased by the Soviet Union arrived in the port of Odessa.

In 1972, President Richard M. Nixon began his historic visit to China as he and his wife, Pat, arrived in Beijing.

In 1973, Israeli fighter planes shot down Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114 over the Sinai Desert, killing all but five of the 113 people on board.

In 1975, former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and former White House aides H.R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman were sentenced to 2 ½ to 8 years in prison for their roles in the Watergate cover-up (each ended up serving 1 ½ years).

In 1992, Kristi Yamaguchi of the United States won the gold medal in ladies' figure skating at the Albertville Olympics; Midori Ito of Japan won the silver, Nancy Kerrigan of the U.S. the bronze.

In 1995, Chicago adventurer Steve Fossett became the first person to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean by balloon, landing in Leader, Saskatchewan, Canada.

In 2018, the Rev. Billy Graham, a confidant of presidents and the most widely heard Christian evangelist in history, died at his North Carolina home at age 99.

In 2019, teachers in Oakland, California, went on strike in the latest in a wave of teacher activism that had included walkouts in Denver, Los Angeles and West Virginia.

In 2020, a temporary truce between the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan took effect, setting the stage for the two sides to sign a peace deal the following week.

Today's birthdays: Actor Gary Lockwood is 87. Actor-director Richard Beymer is 85. Actor Peter McEnery is 84. Film/music company executive David Geffen is 81. Actor Tyne Daly is 78. Actor Anthony Daniels is 78. Tricia Nixon Cox is 78. Former Sen. Olympia J. Snowe, R-Maine, is 77. Rock musician Jerry Harrison (Talking Heads) is 75. Actor Christine Ebersole is 71. Actor William Petersen is 71. Actor Kelsey Grammer is 69. Singer/guitarist Larry Campbell is 69. Country singer Mary Chapin Carpenter is 66. Actor Kim Coates is 66. Actor Jack Coleman is 66. Actor Christopher Atkins is 63. Actor William Baldwin is 61. Sen. Mark Kelly, D-Ariz., is 60. Rock musician Michael Ward is 57. Actor Aunjanue Ellis is 55. Blues musician Corey Harris is 55. Country singer Eric Heatherly is 54. Rock musician Eric Wilson is 54. Rock musician Tad Kinchla (Blues Traveler) is 51. Singer Rhiannon Giddens (Carolina Chocolate Drops) is 47. Actor Tituss Burgess is 45. Actor Jennifer Love Hewitt is 45. Comedian-actor Jordan Peele is 45. Actor Brendan Sexton III is 44. Singer Charlotte Church is 38. Actor Ashley Greene is 37. Actor Elliot Page is 37. Actor Corbin Bleu is 35. Actor Hayley Orrantia is 30. Actor Sophie Turner is 28.

# 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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