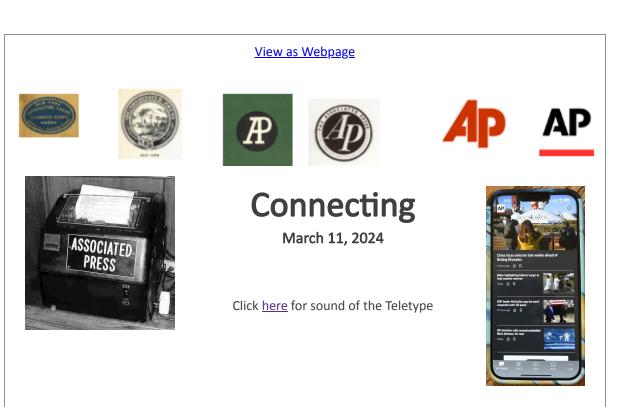
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\rightarrow DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM

MSTYSLAV CHERNOV, MICHELLE MIZNER AND RANEY ARONSON-RATH

Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this March 11, 2024,

Add another first to the 178-year history of The Associated Press:

An Academy Award.

"20 Days in Mariupol," the feature documentary from The Associated Press and PBS documentary series Frontline, won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature Film at Sunday's 96th Academy Awards.

The powerful, first-person view of the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, "20 Days in Mariupol" is told through the perspective of Ukrainian filmmaker and AP video journalist **Mstyslav Chernov**, who made a powerful acceptance speech.

In his acceptance speech, Chernov said: "This is the first Oscar in Ukrainian history. And I'm honoured. But probably I'll be the first director on this stage who will say, 'I wish I never made this film'. I wish I could exchange this for Russia never attacking Ukraine, never occupying our cities. "I cannot change the history, I cannot change the past. But all together – among you, some of the most talented people in the world – we can make sure the record is set straight, and the truth will prevail. And that the people of Mariupol and those who have given their lives will never be forgotten. Cinema forms memories, and memories form history."

Associated Press people past and present from around the world were thrilled and quite proud:

"Yessssss!!, wrote colleague **Reed Saxon** of Los Angeles in a note to Connecting. "Congrats to all who put themselves in harm's way for this essential reportage!."

And that included AP members past and present: **Craig Klugman**, retired editor of the Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, called me minutes after the announcement, saying, "I just had to talk to somebody about it to say how proud I am of the AP."

Got your own thoughts to share? Please send them along.

To watch the documentary, click here.

Here's to. yawn, the start of Daylight Savings Time.

And here's to the new week – be safe, stay healthy, live it to your fullest.

Paul

AP, Frontline documentary '20 Days in Mariupol' wins Academy Award for 'Best Documentary Feature Film'



Raney Aronson-Rath, from left, Vasilisa Stepanenko, Mstyslav Chernov, Evgeniy Maloletka, Michelle Mizner, and Derl McCrudden accept the award for best documentary feature film for "20 Days in Mariupol" during the Oscars on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP Photo/Chris Pizzello)APTO

AP News Release

"20 Days in Mariupol," the feature documentary from The Associated Press and PBS documentary series Frontline, has won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature Film at Sunday's 96th Academy Awards.

This is AP's first ever Academy Award.

A powerful, first-person view of the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, "20 Days in Mariupol" is told through the perspective of Ukrainian filmmaker and AP video journalist Mstyslav Chernov.

Accepting AP and Frontline's first Oscar, Chernov said: "This is the first Oscar in Ukrainian history, and I'm honored but probably I will be the first director on this stage to say I wish I never made this film. We can make sure that the history record is set straight, that the truth prevails, and that the people of Mariupol and those who've given their lives will never be forgotten — because cinema forms memory and memory forms history."

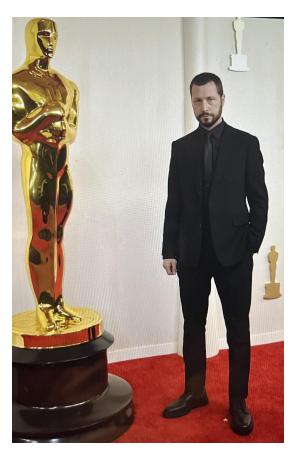
Described as "essential" and "a relentless and truly important documentary" by The New York Times and "a brave, visceral, merciless masterpiece" by The Guardian, the film follows Chernov and his AP colleagues Evgeniy Maloletka and Vasilisa Stepanenko as they become the last international journalists reporting from Mariupol amid Russia's siege. Together, the journalists, who would go on to win the 2023 Pulitzer

Prize for Public Service, documented what would become defining images of the war: dying children, mass graves, the bombing of a maternity hospital, and more.

Following a decorated run on the film festival circuit, "20 Days in Mariupol" had its U.S. broadcast premiere on PBS stations in November 2023 and is now available to stream online at pbs.org/frontline, on the PBS App, on Frontline's YouTube channel and on the PBS Documentaries Amazon Prime Channel.

The documentary is distributed domestically by PBS Distribution and internationally by Dogwoof. Frontline is produced at GBH in Boston.

"20 Days in Mariupol" is directed, written and produced by Chernov, and produced and edited by Frontline's Michelle Mizner alongside producers Raney Aronson-Rath (Frontline's editor-in-chief and executive producer) and Derl McCrudden (AP's vice president and head of global news production). The documentary draws on



Chernov's daily news dispatches and personal footage of his own country at war. The result is a raw and haunting account of a journalist risking his life to share the truth of the conflict with the world.

"Tonight's Oscar is a testament to the importance of eyewitness journalism and the bravery of the AP journalists on the ground in Mariupol, the world's only window into the attack on the Ukrainian city and the plight of its people. We share this great honor with our partners at Frontline, without whom this film would not have been possible," said AP Senior Vice President and Executive Editor Julie Pace. "Two years after the siege of the city, The Associated Press continues to cover the war in Ukraine with the same rigor and determination as you see in '20 Days in Mariupol.'"

"As the war in Ukraine enters its third year, it's clear that "20 Days in Mariupol" was just the first chapter of the tragedy and terror that continues today — and now more than ever, there is a need for this kind of boots-on-the-ground reporting to serve as a necessary and factual record of history. I hope that this Oscar continues to focus attention on the people of Ukraine and the importance of journalism," said Frontline Editor-in-Chief Raney Aronson-Rath. "I want to thank The Associated Press' Mstyslav Chernov, Evgeniy Maloletka and Vasilisa Stepanenko for their bravery and commitment to telling this story. I share this honor with director and producer Mstyslav, Michelle Mizner, Derl McCrudden, our partners at The Associated Press, as well as with PBS Distribution, GBH, PBS and CPB."

"20 Days in Mariupol" made its world premiere in January 2023 at the Sundance Film Festival and was the recipient of the festival's World Cinema Documentary Competition Audience Award. The film has received numerous accolades, including the BAFTA for best documentary, two Critics Choice Documentary Awards, a Cinema Eye Honors Award, a duPont-Columbia Award nomination, and the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA)'s NPO Audience Award.

Click here for link to this story.

Click <u>here</u> for the AP wire story by Lindsey Bahr and Christopher Weber from Los Angeles, headlined: '20 Days in Mariupol' wins best documentary Oscar, a first for AP and PBS' 'Frontline'

Click here for Variety story.

Why the AP retracted the first official photo of the Princess of Wales since her abdominal surgery



BY BRIAN MELLEY

LONDON (AP) — The first official photo of Kate, the Princess of Wales, since she underwent abdominal surgery nearly two months ago, was pulled from circulation by

The Associated Press and several other news organizations because the image appeared to have been manipulated.

Kensington Palace had issued the image Sunday as speculation swirled on social media about the whereabouts of the oftphotographed princess who hadn't been seen in public since December.

But efforts to tamp down rumors and supposition may have backfired after royal observers noticed inconsistencies in the photo's details.

While there was no suggestion the image was fake, AP pulled the photograph from circulation because it did not meet its

P PHOTO KILL



DITORS AND LIBRARIANS: KILL FROM OUR SYSTEMS AND ARCHIVES PHOTO BJ110, SLUGGED BRITAIN ROYALS AND ROYALS AND ROYALS AND COLOSER INSECTION IT ARAMSHITEO ON SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 024, AT CLOSER INSECTION IT MANNUALED THE INAGE. NO HERLACEMENT PHOTO WILL BE SERT. humble in addated photo issued on Sunday farch 10, 2024 by Kensington Palace hows Kate, Prince Casso of Wales with her hildren, Prince Louis, left, Prince George exek. The Princes of Wales shared a nessage on social media thanking the ublic for their continued support and ublic for their continued support and uslin by Mother's Day.

photo standards. Kensington Palace declined to comment.

WHAT HAPPENED?

The photo appeared on social media channels for the Prince and Princess of Wales at 9 a.m. along with a message from Kate wishing everyone a happy Mothers' Day, which was celebrated Sunday in the United Kingdom.

The release of the photo followed weeks of gossip on social media about what had happened to Kate since she left a hospital Jan. 29 after a nearly two-week stay following planned surgery. She hadn't been seen publicly since Christmas Day.

The photo showed a healthy looking Kate seated in a chair surrounded by her smiling three children. It was credited to her husband, Prince William, heir to the throne, and was said to have been taken earlier in the week in Windsor.

"Thank you for your kind wishes and continued support over the last two months," she said.

The story quickly became a top news story in Britain and the photo had almost 50 million views on the X social media platform by the end of the day.

But close study of the image revealed inconsistencies that suggested it had been altered, for instance in the alignment of Princess Charlotte's left hand with the sleeve of her sweater.

Read more <u>here</u>. Shared by Mark Mittelstadt, Richard Chady, John Lumpkin, Doug Pizac, Myron Belkind.

Your thoughts on politician joining picket line?

20.0K posts

Council Member Zo Qadri, District 9 @CMZoQadri · 17h

Today I was happy to stand with the Austin NewsGuild as workers from the Austin American-Statesman picketed for a fair contract. I support their efforts to negotiate and bargain in good faith for better pay and benefits!





Zohaib "Zo" Qadri @zoforaustin · 17h

It is time for Gannett to reach a contract with the Austin NewsGuild and the Pulitzer Prize finalist journalists at the Austin American-Statesman.

Send a letter: actionnetwork.org/letters/gannet...

Donate to the strike fund: gofundme.com/f/ubcyf6-austi...

<u>Ken Herman</u> - I'd be interested in hearing veteran journalists' thoughts on a situation at the Austin American-Statesman (my former longtime employer). The staff unionized about three years ago. Has been in nonproductive contract talks with Gannett since then.

A strike could happen, but for now the staff periodically stages informational picket lines seeking public support.

Austin City Council member Zo Qadri recently joined one of those demonstrations. He voiced his support on X and encouraged people to donate to the staff's strike fund.

Anybody else a bit uncomfortable (or more) about journalists allowing an elected official who they cover to join their effort to make more money? Does this picket line cross an ethical line?

BEST OF THE WEEK — FIRST WINNER AP beats everyone on Mitch McConnell's decision to step down



Even before U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell began speaking in the well of the chamber on Feb. 28, everyone knew what the Republican leader's historic announcement would be. That was because AP had already delivered the news, scooping all competition, thanks to source work and perfect execution by Deputy Bureau Chief Mike Tackett and a team of colleagues in Washington.

Tackett had already obtained McConnell's remarks in advance, saying he planned to step down in November to close his run as the longest-serving Senate leader in history. That allowed enough time to prepare not only an APNewsAlert but also a full story. Tackett also worked out an agreement that AP could publish before McConnell made his announcement on the Senate floor.

Tackett, who is writing a biography on McConnell, worked closely with digital politics editor Katie Vogel and Washington text editor Tom Strong to make sure the copy was edited and ready go — and worked up a full digital engagement plan so when the news was published, the AP would be in a strong position to win on audience engagement. Tackett also worked closely with photos and video to ensure the AP was ready across formats.

When the time came, Strong filed the urgent copy perfectly with the APNewsAlert and full story moving within the same minute. The push alert and breaking social plan also sailed out, beating all competitors by 10 minutes or more.

The news sent a buzz through the Senate floor, and several journalists there asked Tackett how he did it. From Politico to The New York Times, publications cited the AP's story and continued to give it credit for the scoop throughout the day.

Read more here.

BEST OF THE WEEK — SECOND WINNER AP team overcomes security risks to cover Haiti's spiraling violence



From Port-au-Prince to Miami to Mexico City, AP journalists drew on deep knowledge of Haiti to file a steady stream of breaking news of a government under siege and civilians diving for cover.

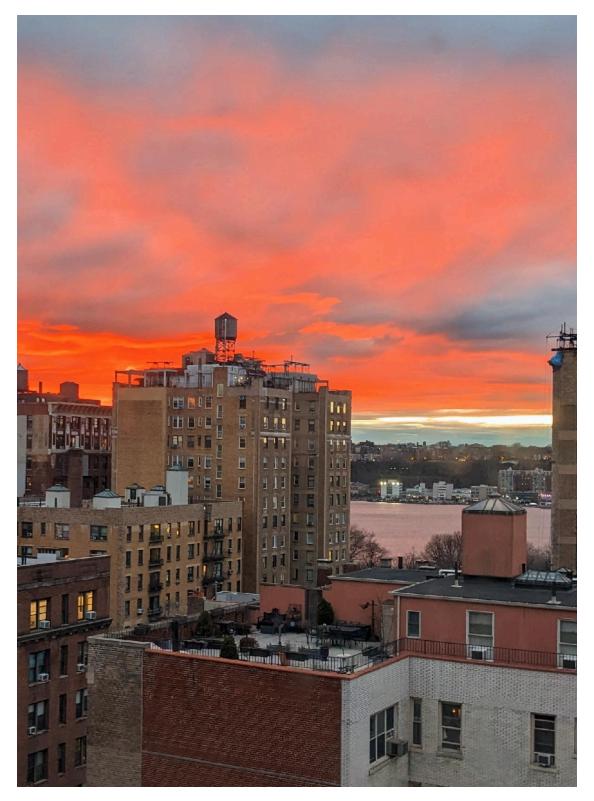
Experienced freelancers with deep knowledge of their native country, video journalist Pierre Luxama and photographer Joseph Odelyn, rushed to provide the first videos and photos from the international media after a powerful gang leader announced he would try to capture the police chief and government minister while the prime minister was out of the country. Prime Minister Ariel Henry was in Kenya to secure the deployment of a police force to help fight the very gangs that were attacking targets back home, including the international airport. Caribbean correspondent based in Puerto Rico Dánica Coto and Latin America Affairs correspondent Josh Goodman based in Miami worked with reporter Evens Sanon to explain the scope and back story of the ensuing lawlessness to an international audience.

AP's Haiti-based team has learned to determine when and what areas are safe to enter and when to turn away. They watch for roadblocks, pedestrians, and written signs and talk to locals to help determine the level of risk of reporting. As our teams navigated the extremely volatile situation on the ground, regional desk editors and producers expanded the breadth and depth of the coverage through digitally friendly text and a video explainer.

For taking all the possible safety measures to safely continue covering Haiti's chaotic volatility and providing reporting support beyond borders, AP's Haiti reporting team of Luxama, Odelyn, Coto, Goodman and Sanon are Best of the Week — Second Winner.

Read more here.

View from kitchen window



<u>Claude Erbsen</u> - Sunset over New Jersey from my kitchen window in Manhattan.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Molly Gordy

Kernan Turner

Stories of interest

Spate of Mock News Sites With Russian Ties Pop Up

in U.S. (New York Times)

By Steven Lee Myers

Into the depleted field of journalism in America, a handful of websites have appeared in recent weeks with names suggesting a focus on news close to home: D.C. Weekly, the New York News Daily, the Chicago Chronicle and a newer sister publication, the Miami Chronicle.

In fact, they are not local news organizations at all. They are Russian creations, researchers and government officials say, meant to mimic actual news organizations to push Kremlin propaganda by interspersing it among an at-times odd mix of stories about crime, politics and culture.

While Russia has long sought ways to influence public discourse in the United States, the fake news organizations — at least five, so far — represent a technological leap in its efforts to find new platforms to dupe unsuspecting American readers. The sites, the researchers and officials said, could well be the foundations of an online network primed to surface disinformation ahead of the American presidential election in November.

Patrick Warren, a co-director at Clemson University's Media Forensics Hub, which has exposed furtive Russian disinformation efforts, said advances in artificial intelligence and other digital tools had "made this even easier to do and to make the content that they do even more targeted."

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

-0-

Victor Wembanyama is a photographer's dream. And his greatest challenge. (Washington Post)

By Ben Golliver

The first thing Michael Anthony Gonzales did was buy a step ladder.

For the 5-foot-6 photographer, whose job suddenly revolved around shooting Victor Wembanyama, the San Antonio Spurs' 7-foot-4 phenom, boosting his line of sight was one of many necessary adjustments. Before long, Gonzales had acquired extra-tall, 13-foot studio backdrops to fully surround the French center and had switched to a wider-angle 28-300 millimeter camera lens to better accommodate Wembanyama's 8foot wingspan. When the NBA's regular season began, Gonzales deployed a remote camera in the backboard to ensure he didn't miss a dunk or block, angling the lens so both sides of the rim were covered just in case.

Gonzales's equipment tweaks were only one aspect of what he calls the "Wemby effect." During the Spurs' highly anticipated media day in October, a pack of reporters swarmed his photo stations for a glimpse at the rookie. As Gonzales worried about the onlookers tripping over his cables and lights, his assistant was so overwhelmed by Wembanyama's presence during a shoot that he kept fumbling simple passes from the 2023 No. 1 draft pick. Thankfully, Wembanyama broke the ice by laughing.

Read more <u>here</u>. Shared by Cliff Schiappa.

-0-

Democracy demands well-funded investigative journalism

KEVIN FRAZIER The Fulcrum

Investigative journalism, which is critical to a healthy democracy, comes at a high cost. The return on investment, though, is substantial. Ida Tarbell's willingness to dig into Standard Oil's egregious business practices bolstered efforts to pass the Clayton Antitrust Act and to create the Federal Trade Commission. Upton Sinclair's daring investigation into the meatpacking plants of Chicago likewise resulted in a long overdue regulatory response.

These and other muckrakers sacrificed to provide the public with the information required to fulfill democratic duties — to identify communal problems, to debate solutions and to monitor the effectiveness of those solutions.

More than a century later, the costs of investigative journalism have only increased. A Washington Post exposé on the D.C. police, for instance, required a team of nine

reporters, editors and specialists, involved eight months of research and investigation, and cost nearly \$500,000.

The resulting changes to police practices may have produced \$73.6 million in societal benefits — and that's a conservative estimate. The expense and the returns of the Post's story are not atypical. It often takes six months to produce an investigative news piece. Yet, such reporting can lead to swift and significant regulatory responses. Those benefits, though, often don't carry over to the publisher's bottom line. As recounted by Professor Neil Netenal: "[I]n 2016, the non-profit news magazine Mother Jones spent some \$350,000 to produce an in-depth investigation exposing the brutal working conditions for inmates in private prisons. The blockbuster story ... attracted more than a million readers and triggered a Department of Justice announcement that it would end its use of private prisons. Despite the piece's impact, Mother Jones earned only \$5,000 in revenue from the banner ads that ran with the piece."

Read more **here**. Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

-0-

Al robot sparks outrage after 'groping' reporter during live interview (Metro)

William McGee and Katherine Fidler

There are already fears of artificial intelligence (AI) taking our jobs, or even ending humanity all together. Now a robot has been filmed apparently groping a woman in Saudi Arabia.

The seven-second clip was taken at DeepFest in Riyadh – an event billed as the 'premier meeting place for the global artificial intelligence ecosystem'.

During the showcase, reporter Rawya Kassem was seen speaking in front of the AI robot, called Mohammad, when it appeared to reach out and attempt to touch her inappropriately.

Ms Kassem immediately flinched, and turned around with her hand raised, appearing to admonish him while continuing her job.

Read more <u>here</u>. Shared by Doug Pizac.

Today in History - March 11, 2024



Today is Monday, March 11, the 71st day of 2024. There are 295 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history:

On March 11, 2011, a magnitude-9.0 earthquake and resulting tsunami struck Japan's northeastern coast, killing nearly 20,000 people and severely damaging the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power station.

On this date:

In 1862, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln removed Gen. George B. McClellan as general-in-chief of the Union armies, leaving him in command of the Army of the Potomac, a post McClellan also ended up losing.

In 1918, what were believed to be the first confirmed U.S. cases of a deadly global flu pandemic were reported among U.S. Army soldiers stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas; 46 soldiers would die. (The worldwide outbreak of influenza claimed an estimated 20 to 40 million lives.)

In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease Bill, providing war supplies to countries fighting the Axis.

In 1942, as Japanese forces continued to advance in the Pacific during World War II, U.S. Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur left the Philippines for Australia, where he vowed on March 20, "I shall return" — a promise he kept more than 2 1/2 years later.

In 1954, the U.S. Army charged that Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., and his subcommittee's chief counsel, Roy Cohn, had exerted pressure to obtain favored treatment for Pvt. G. David Schine, a former consultant to the subcommittee. (The confrontation culminated in the famous Senate Army-McCarthy hearings.)

In 1985, Mikhail S. Gorbachev was chosen to succeed the late Konstantin U. Chernenko as general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party.

In 1997, Paul McCartney was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II.

In 2002, two columns of light soared skyward from Ground Zero in New York as a temporary memorial to the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks six months earlier.

In 2004, ten bombs exploded in quick succession across the commuter rail network in Madrid, Spain, killing 191 people in an attack linked to al-Qaida-inspired militants.

In 2006, former Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic (sloh-BOH'-dahn mee-LOH'-shuh-vich) was found dead of a heart attack in his prison cell in the Netherlands, abruptly ending his four-year U.N. war crimes trial; he was 64.

In 2010, a federal appeals court in San Francisco upheld the use of the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and "In God We Trust" on U.S. currency.

In 2012, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bales shot and killed 16 Afghan villagers — mostly women and children — as they slept; Bales later pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In 2013, former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick (D) was convicted of a raft of crimes, including racketeering conspiracy (he was later sentenced to 28 years in prison).

In 2018, lawmakers in China abolished presidential term limits that had been in place for more than 35 years, opening up the possibility of Xi Jinping (shee jihn-peeng) holding power for life.

In 2020, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. Former Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein was sentenced in New York to 23 years in prison for rape and sexual abuse.

In 2021, President Joe Biden signed into law a \$1.9 trillion COVID relief package that he said would help defeat the virus and nurse the economy back to health; Americans would receive up to \$1,400 in direct payments, along with extended unemployment benefits.

In 2022, Russia widened its offensive in Ukraine, striking airfields in the west and a major industrial city in the east, while the huge armored column that had been stalled for over a week outside Kyiv went on the move again.

Today's birthdays: Media mogul Rupert Murdoch is 93. Former ABC News correspondent Sam Donaldson is 90. Musician Flaco Jimenez (FLAH'-koh hee-MEH'nez) is 85. Actor Tricia O'Neil is 79. Actor Mark Metcalf is 78. Rock singer-musician Mark Stein (Vanilla Fudge) is 77. Singer Bobby McFerrin is 74. Movie director Jerry Zucker is 74. Singer Cheryl Lynn is 73. Actor Susan Richardson is 72. Recording executive Jimmy Iovine (eye-VEEN') is 71. Singer Nina Hagen is 69. Country singer Jimmy Fortune (The Statler Brothers) is 69. Actor Elias Koteas (ee-LY'-uhs koh-TAY'uhs) is 63. Actor-director Peter Berg is 62. Singer Mary Gauthier (GOH'-shay) is 62. Actor Jeffrey Nordling is 62. Actor Alex Kingston is 61. Actor Wallace Langham is 59. Former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-III., is 59. Actor John Barrowman is 57. Singer Lisa Loeb is 56. Neo-soul musician Al Gamble (St. Paul & the Broken Bones) is 55. Singer Pete Droge is 55. Actor Terrence Howard is 55. Rock musician Rami Jaffee is 55. Actor Johnny Knoxville is 53. Rock singer-musicians Benji and Joel Madden (Good Charlotte; The Madden Brothers) are 45. Actor David Anders is 43. Singer LeToya Luckett is 43. Actor Thora Birch is 42. TV personality Melissa Rycroft is 41. Actor Rob Brown is 40. Actor Jodie Comer is 31.

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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