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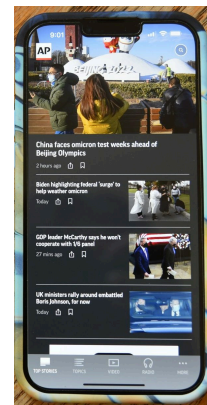
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Connecting

April 17, 2024

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this April 17, 2024,

Have you seen the new movie “Civil War”?

If so, then you might want to offer your thoughts on the in-theater production that includes a strong journalistic angle. Read our opening post by colleague **Cliff Schiappa** for more.

Your thoughts would be welcomed.

NEW AP NEWSLETTER: The AP Religion Team is launching a weekly newsletter that will feature a diverse roundup of compelling faith-related news from around the world. Fittingly, its called World of Faith. You can sign up via [this link](#). Note that there are a number of AP newsletters also included in the link that you can subscribe to, at no cost.

GENE HERRICK SERVICES: A celebration of life for our colleague **Gene Herrick** will be held at 2 p.m. Eastern on Saturday, May 4, at Rocky Mount Christian Church with The Rev. John Heck officiating. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service beginning at 1 p.m. Click [here](#) for a link to the Conner-Bowman Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, Va., where you can leave a note of condolence for the family. Gene, who covered the Korean War and the Civil Rights Movement for the AP, died April 12 at the age of 97.

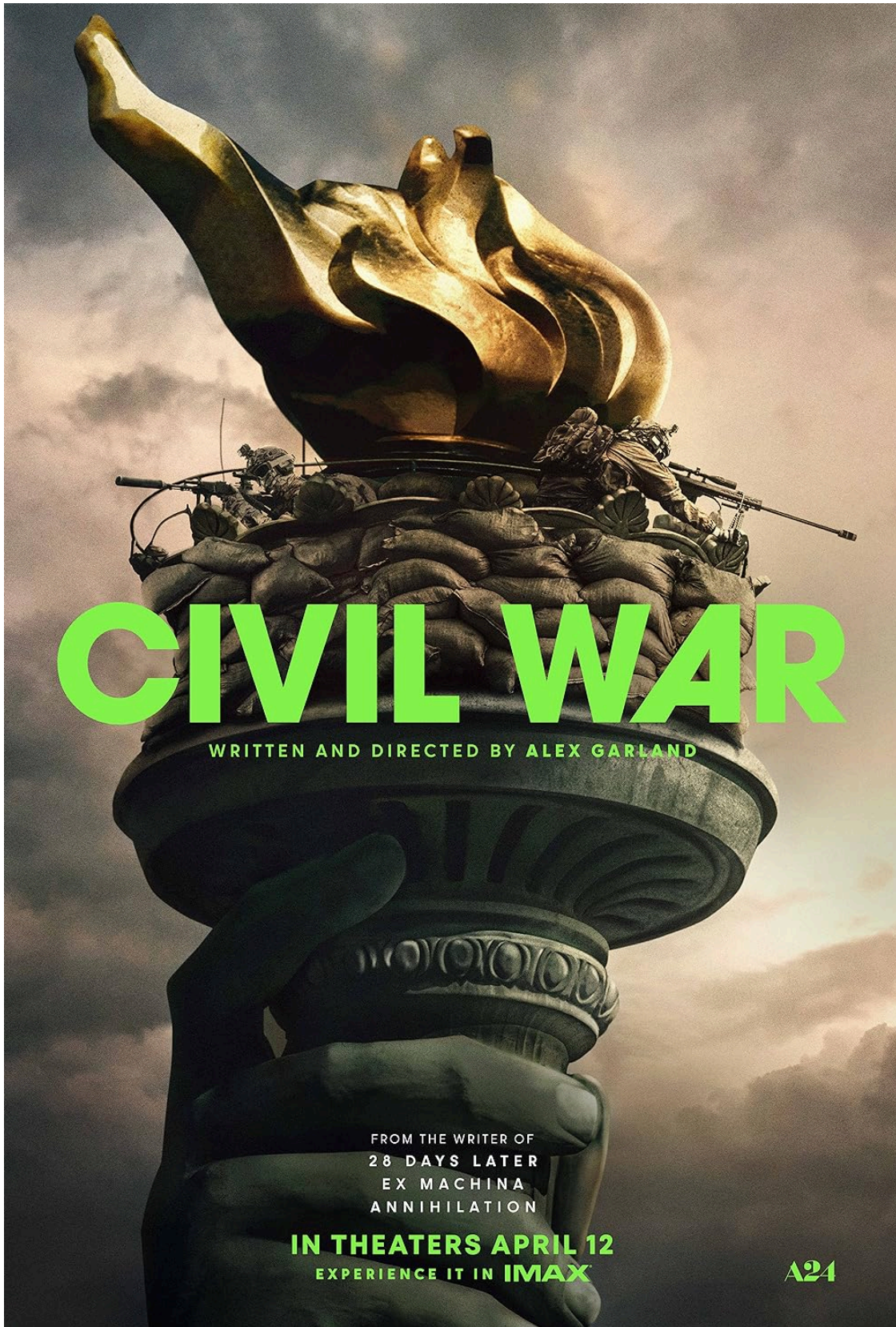
Our colleague [Neal Ulevich](#) shares: "I never met Gene. But he was a photographer, and there are only a few who made pictures that cannot be unseen. His images of Rosa Parks and especially Martin Luther King Jr. receiving the kiss are in my mind forever."

Finally, we bring you a **New-Member Profile** from one of Connecting's newest members – **Bob Heisse**. If you are new to Connecting, or even if you're a veteran and you've yet to send along a similar profile, please do so – about 300 words or so and a current photo. It's a great way for us to know more about each other.

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

Paul

Wanted: Your thoughts on new movie 'Civil War'



Cliff Schiappa - The new movie “Civil War,” directed by Alex Garland and starring Kirsten Dunst, led the weekend box office results with \$25.7 million in ticket sales. I was one of those people in the theater for a Sunday matinee and when it was over I walked out into the blinding desert sun exhausted, anxious, and somewhat satisfied. After reflecting upon those conflicting emotions, I thought perhaps other Connecting readers would like to give their thoughts about the film as well.

Dunst, along with co-stars Wagner Moura, Cailee Spaeny and Stephen McKinley Henderson all portrayed journalists covering a Civil War on American soil in modern times. Dunst plays a Reuters photojournalist teamed up with a Reuters writer played by Moura. Henderson is a New York Times writer and Spaeny is an aspiring photographer. Because of the overwhelming screen time devoted to journalists, I'd be curious to read what others in the industry thought about the production.

SPOILER ALERT! For me, I thought the depiction of the journalists to be quite solid, which surprised me. I expected Hollywood to present them not as seriously as their circumstances warranted. I found the scenes of typical America under siege to be unsettling and the conflicts between fellow citizens to be disturbing. The battle scenes, especially those in close quarters in Washington D.C., were incredibly intense, and I found some characters to be downright frightening. I'd be especially interested to hear from White House journalists about their reaction to the attack on the building and Secret Service agents.

The audience is dropped into the middle of the war with minimal context as to why it started, and are presented with the unlikely collaboration of California and Texas creating what's called the Western Front. But upon further reflection, why shouldn't there be such bizarre bedfellows, after all, the nation is on some precarious footings now, who knows where it could lead? The other refreshing surprise is the absence of red/blue political statements. Contemporary names or incidents were never mentioned.

I'm no movie reviewer, just a collection of thoughts. I look forward to hearing from other Connecting colleagues!

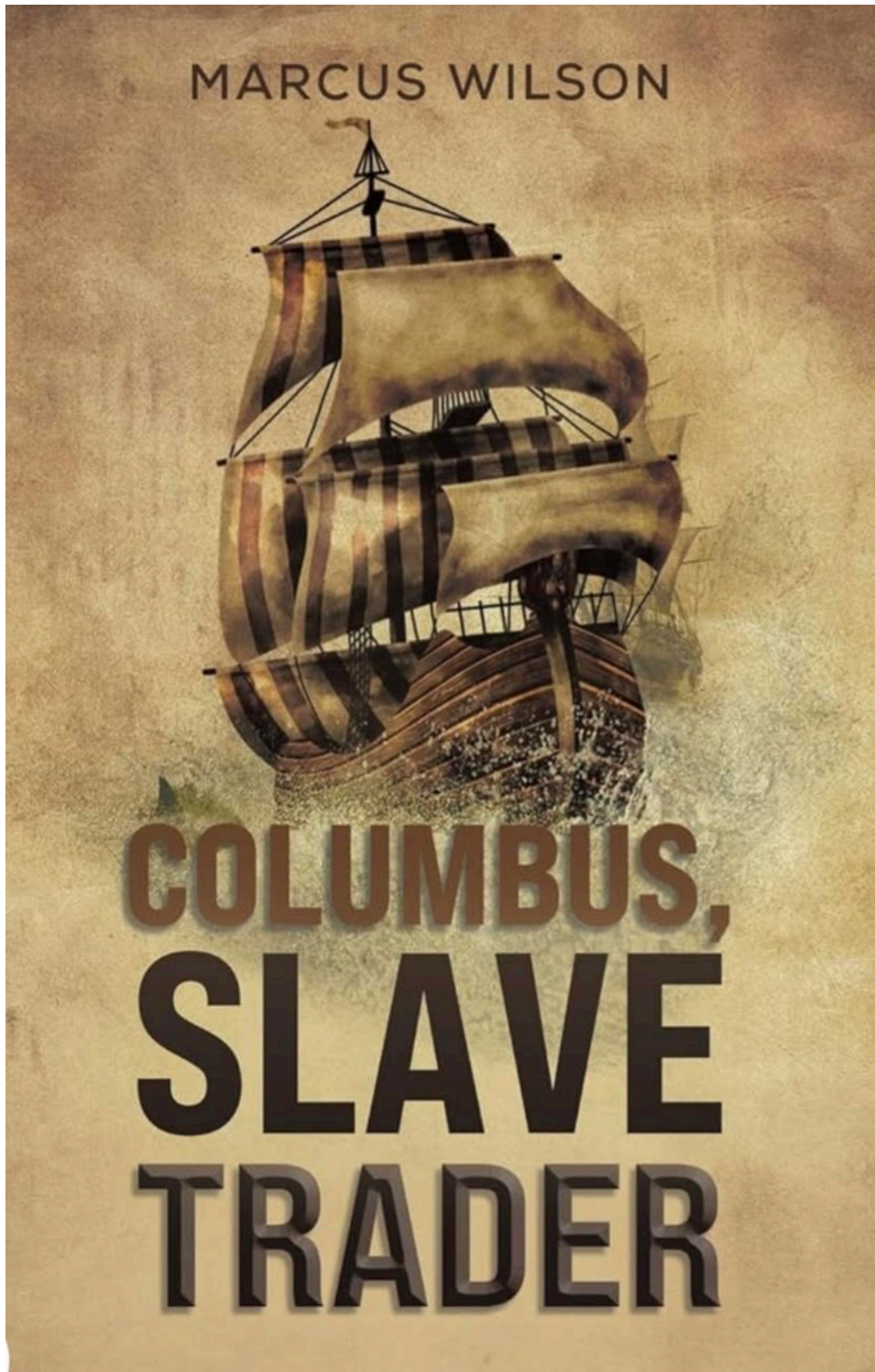
New-member profile: Bob Heisse

Bob Heisse retired in February 2023, capping a 44-year journalism career all in daily newspapers. He served as APME president in 2012 and organized the conference in Nashville. He served as top editor in several markets, including La Crosse and Kenosha in Wisconsin, Northwest Indiana, Springfield, Ill and State College, PA. While in Kenosha he oversaw coverage of the unrest after the Jacob Blake shooting, and while in State College he oversaw coverage of the Sandusky scandal.

He moved to Henderson, NV, after retirement and left winter behind for good. But he's still active, working guest services/ushering at events in Vegas as a second career. He works hockey and all events at T Mobile Arena and is starting next month at Allegiant Stadium too. As someone who always loved attending shows and sports, now he has fun and enjoys them while assisting others.



Christopher Columbus and a little-known truth: he was a slave trader



Above, the cover; at right, Marc and grandson Zachary Wilson

[Marc Wilson](#) - My third book, *Columbus Slave Trader*, will be published later this month by Austin McCauley of New York. The book, in either hardback or paper back,

can be pre-ordered on Amazon for delivery on April 29.

Below is the back cover synopsis of the book:

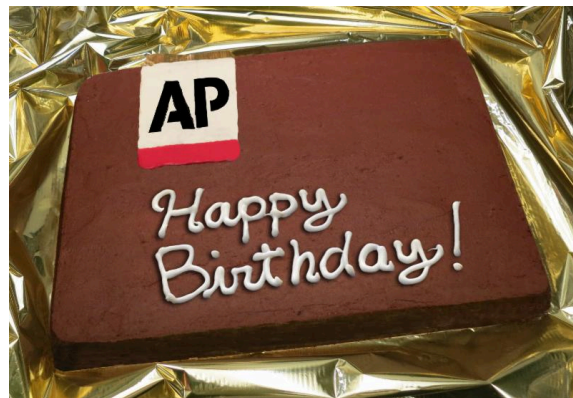
Columbus, Slave Trader delves into an eye-opening exploration of history as it uncovers a seldom-told truth: the initial transatlantic slave ships did not traverse from Africa to America with captive Africans. Instead, the journey took a different, darker turn. The very first slave ships embarked from the New World to Europe, carrying a harrowing cargo of 500 captured Native Americans. Their enslaver? Christopher Columbus himself.

As the narrative unfolds, we confront the chilling reality of this early chapter in the slave trade, where these Native Americans, originally destined for Seville's slave auction, endured unimaginable hardships. Only 80 would emerge as survivors, highlighting the heart-wrenching toll of this historic voyage.

Columbus, Slave Trader is a stark, essential and accurate historical fiction account that challenges prevailing narratives, shedding light on a pivotal moment in history and reevaluating our understanding of Columbus as not only an explorer but also as a slave trader.



Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Kiki Lascaris Georgiou](#)

[Joyce Rosenberg](#)

Stories of interest

Trump trial: Why can't Americans see or hear what is going on inside the courtroom? (AP)

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — It's a moment in history — the first U.S. president facing criminal charges in an American courtroom. Yet only a handful of observers are able to see or even hear what is going on.

Instead, most of the nation is getting news of former President Donald Trump's hush money trial secondhand. Starting with preliminary motions and jury selection Monday, reporters in a Manhattan courtroom must convey what is being said to the outside world after the fact.

That's all because New York state law regarding media coverage of court proceedings is one of the most restrictive in the country. Last week's death of O.J. Simpson, whose murder trial beamed live from a California courtroom captivated a nation three decades ago, was a telling reminder of how New York is behind the times — or, at least, a holdout.

WHY WON'T NEW YORK LET ME SEE IT?

Regulations limiting media coverage in courtrooms date back nearly a century, when the spectacle of bright flashbulbs and camera operators standing on witness tables during the 1935 trial of the man accused of kidnapping and killing Charles Lindbergh's baby son horrified the legal community, according to a 2022 report by the New York-based Fund for Modern Courts.

Read more [here](#).

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Opinion The worst mainstream media habit: Distorting polls for clicks (Washington Post)

By Jennifer Rubin

By now, my readers know full well what I think of national polls taken nearly seven months before the election: They are worse than meaningless. Pervasive polling obsession winds up misinforming (and freaking out) voters while crowding out the essential aspects of a historic campaign.

For starters, constant polling hype frames the election as a horse race, devoid of moral or policy outcomes. Premature polling distracts us from what is critical and central — four-times indicted former president Donald Trump's unprecedented attack on democracy. (When you want to "suspend" the Constitution, use a putsch to overturn the will of the voters, unleash the military on civilians and weaponize the Justice

Department, you are pining to undermine democracy and turn America into something resembling Viktor Orban's Hungary.)

At its worst, coverage of polling misleads voters. Consider the opening of a recent New York Times article. "President Biden has nearly erased Donald J. Trump's early polling advantage, amid signs that the Democratic base has begun to coalesce behind the president despite lingering doubts about the direction of the country, the economy and his age, according to a new survey by the New York Times and Siena College," writes Shane Goldmacher.

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

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NPR suspends editor who criticized his employer for what he calls an unquestioned liberal worldview (AP)

NEW YORK (AP) — National Public Radio has suspended a veteran editor who wrote an outside essay criticizing his employer for, in his view, journalism that reflects a liberal viewpoint with little tolerance for contrary opinions.

Uri Berliner, a senior editor on NPR's business desk, was suspended five days without pay, according to an article posted Tuesday by NPR's media correspondent, David Folkenflik. He wrote that Berliner was told he violated the company's policy that it must approve work done for outside news organizations.

Berliner told NPR that he was not appealing the suspension. An NPR spokeswoman said the company would not comment on individual personnel matters.

He wrote his essay last week for The Free Press. Berliner wrote that NPR has always had a liberal bent, but for most of his 25-year tenure had an open-minded, curious culture.

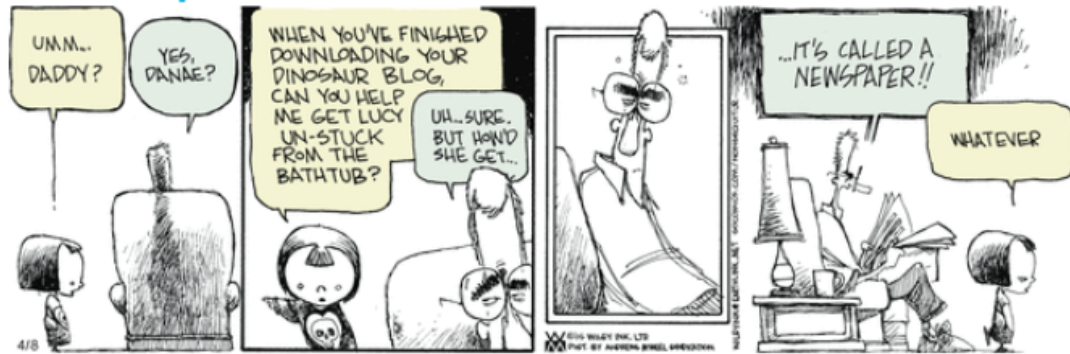
Read more [here](#).

The Final Word



Shared by Adolphe Bernotas

Non Sequitur by Wiley Miller



Shared by Len Iwanski

PEANUTS



Shared by Doug Pizac

Today in History – April 17, 2024



Today is Wednesday, April 17, the 108th day of 2024. There are 258 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 17, 1961, some 1,500 CIA-trained Cuban exiles launched the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in an attempt to topple Fidel Castro, whose forces crushed the incursion by the third day.

On this date:

In 1521, Martin Luther went before the Diet of Worms (vohrms) to face charges stemming from his religious writings. (Luther was later declared an outlaw by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.)

In 1961, "The Apartment" won the Academy Award for best picture of 1960; Burt Lancaster was named best actor for "Elmer Gantry," while the best actress award went to Elizabeth Taylor for "Butterfield 8."

In 1964, Ford Motor Co. unveiled the Mustang at the New York World's Fair.

In 1969, a jury in Los Angeles convicted Sirhan Sirhan of assassinating Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

In 1970, Apollo 13 astronauts James A. Lovell, Fred W. Haise and Jack Swigert splashed down safely in the Pacific, four days after a ruptured oxygen tank crippled their spacecraft while en route to the moon.

In 1972, the Boston Marathon allowed women to compete for the first time; Nina Kuscsik was the first officially recognized women's champion, with a time of 3:10:26.

In 1973, Federal Express (later FedEx) began operations as 14 planes carrying 186 packages took off from Memphis International Airport, bound for 25 U.S. cities.

In 1975, Cambodia's five-year war ended as the capital Phnom Penh fell to the Khmer Rouge, which instituted brutal, radical policies that claimed an estimated 1.7 million lives until the regime was overthrown in 1979.

In 1986, at London's Heathrow Airport, a bomb was discovered in the bag of Anne-Marie Murphy, a pregnant Irishwoman about to board an El Al jetliner to Israel; she'd been tricked into carrying the bomb by her Jordanian fiance, Nezar Hindawi.

In 1991, the Dow Jones industrial average closed above 3,000 for the first time, ending the day at 3,004.46, up 17.58.

In 1993, a federal jury in Los Angeles convicted two former police officers of violating the civil rights of beaten motorist Rodney King; two other officers were acquitted.

In 2012, riding on the back of a 747 jet, retired space shuttle Discovery traveled from Cape Canaveral, Florida, to Chantilly, Virginia, to be installed in its new home: the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum annex in Virginia.

In 2013, 15 people were killed in an explosion at a fertilizer plant in the city of West, Texas.

In 2018, Barbara Bush, who was both a first lady and the mother of a president, died in Houston at the age of 92; she was survived by her husband, George H.W. Bush; their marriage of 73 years was the longest of any presidential couple in American history.

In 2020, President Donald Trump urged supporters to "LIBERATE" three states led by Democratic governors, apparently encouraging protests against stay-at-home mandates aimed at stopping the coronavirus.

In 2022, Ukrainian fighters holed up in a steel plant in the last known pocket of resistance inside the shattered city of Mariupol ignored a surrender-or-die ultimatum from the Russians and continued to hold out against the capture of the strategically vital port.

Today's Birthdays: Actor David Bradley is 82. Composer-musician Jan Hammer (yahn HAH'-mur) is 76. Actor Olivia Hussey is 73. Actor Clarke Peters is 72. Rapper Afrika Bambaataa is 67. Actor Sean Bean is 65. Former NFL quarterback Boomer Esiason is 63. Actor Joel Murray is 62. Rock singer Maynard James Keenan (Tool) is 60. Actor Lela Rochon is 60. Actor William Mapother is 59. Actor Leslie Bega is 57. Actor Henry Ian Cusick is 57. Actor Kimberly Elise is 57. Singer Liz Phair is 57. Director/producer Adam McKay is 56. Rapper-actor Redman is 54. Actor Jennifer Garner is 52. Singer Victoria Beckham is 50. Actor-singer Lindsay Korman is 46. Actor Tate Ellington is 45. Actor Nicholas D'Agosto is 44. Actor Charlie Hofheimer is 43. Actor Rooney Mara is 39. Actor Jacqueline MacInnes Wood is 37. Actor Paulie Litt is 29. Actor Dee Dee Davis 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.

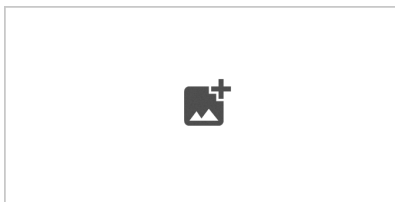
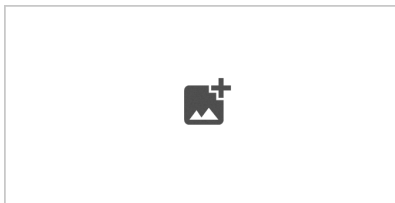
Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

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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