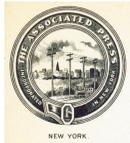

From: stevenspl@live.com on behalf of Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 10:55 AM
To: stevenspl@live.com
Subject: CONNECTING - February 5, 2014

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Connecting

February 5, 2014



Colleagues,

Good (Kansas City snowy) morning!

Here are two AP blogs of interest:

AP's deputy managing editor **Tom Kent**, "No press" decrees: a challenge for reporters". Click [here](#) to read, and thanks to **Mark Mittelstadt** for sharing.

And, "Pinning hopes on Olympic metal?" Click [here](#) to read, and thanks to **Francesca Pitaro** for sharing

WELCOME TO CONNECTING



Dudley welcomes the newest members of Connecting:

Jon Halvorsen, former AP Albany, Portland OR and Portland ME newsman

Derek Donovan, reader representative for The Kansas City Star

Stories of interest...

Buzzfeed's got style - and it ain't AP's

-0-

How breaking news is breaking us: The rush to report Philip Seymour Hoffman's death

-0-

For Pakistani journos, a treacherous calling

-0-

The Tyranny and Lethargy of the Times Editorial Page

-0-

Journalists at Sochi are live-tweeting their hilarious and gross hotel experiences

AND

Staying in Sochi is a hilarious adventure

-0-

Staff out of Time: Cutbacks begin at top, dozens more to come (Bob Daugherty)

-0-

Obama: 'Of course' O'Reilly is unfair

-0-

Gannett earnings report hints at a coming problem with paywalls

-0-

Afghanistan's media flourish in Taliban's wake

-0-

Major Expansion Ahead at The Washington Post (Doug Pizac)

-0-

Time LightBox: Powerful Photos from the 2014 World Photography Awards Shortlist

-0-

3 ways Facebook's Paper app outperforms other news aggregators (and 3 ways it doesn't)

-0-

Beat of the Week (Valerie Komor)

Colleagues,

Special reporting brings us eye-to-eye with the news. It's about fighting for access, getting past obstacles, even formidable ones.

Suppose you want to report on a sensitive type of training for the Pakistani military, a famously closed, press-shy institution. That's the access challenge that Rebecca Santana confronted.

Or suppose you hope to show the plight of Afghan refugee children in a Pakistani slum, where parents and elders make clear that they want them left alone. That's what Muhammed Muheisen faced.

But these veteran AP journalists, leaders of our coverage in Pakistan, each won the access they sought and produced two separate, exclusive closeups _ Santana's all-formats view of soldiers at a school to deal with the deadly menace of homemade bombs, and Muheisen's haunting gallery of portraits showing the youngest faces of war and displacement.

In each case, it required first an inspired story idea, then doggedness, persuasion and patience to pull it off. And in pulling it off they jointly claim this week's Beat of the Week.

Santana, acting bureau chief in Pakistan, has been trying to gain closer access to the military since she arrived in 2012, after covering the war in Iraq and the U.S. military there. Last May, she was the only foreign correspondent at a conference on roadside bombs, during which one Pakistani general mentioned the new counter-IED school. Santana quickly put in a request to visit and then for months repeatedly nudged military officials about it.

She well knew the importance of the training. Of more than 4,000 soldier deaths and 13,000 military injuries in the war, most have been caused by improvised explosive devices.

When Santana's persistence finally brought an invitation after six months, AP became the first foreign news agency to be allowed to visit the school, where she was accompanied by both TV and photos. They also went to a military hospital where victims of the deadly bombs are taken for rehabilitation, and Santana interviewed U.S. military officials who have sometimes been critical of the Pakistani military but lauded the bomb-detection school.

The story was used extensively on MSN, Yahoo, Fox, The Washington Post and others, including Pakistani newspapers.

<http://news.msn.com/world/inside-pakistan-army-bomb-school> <http://news.yahoo.com/ap-exclusive-inside-pakistani-anti-bomb-school-12351431>

One reason Santana wanted to do the story is because the military often is covered from the viewpoint of headquarters in Rawalpindi and how generals there relate to the civilian government or to the U.S. and Afghanistan.

"Obviously, that's a very important story," she says, "but I'm also interested in looking at much lower levels of the military, the lower-ranking officers, the enlisted soldiers. They have been such an important part of the war on terror, and I really want to understand the toll that it's had on them."

During chilling training to detect bombs hidden, for instance, behind a cupboard door in a mock residential compound or set to go off by trip wires, one trainee soldier confided to Santana: "We face it whenever we travel, or if there is a compound, a path, or some other place, it is always in our mind."

Muheisen similarly sought out a ground-level view: AP's chief photographer in Islamabad and part of the team that won the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for breaking news photography for Iraq coverage, he has been committed to documenting daily life in Pakistan.

As part of that, he has often visited the slum areas where Afghan refugees live. These areas, makeshift camps on the edge of the city, are difficult to access. People there tend to be more conservative Pashtuns who are fairly suspicious of outsiders, and there are security issues because militants have been known to hide among the refugees. In addition, there's crime in these areas, meaning it's best not to stay too late in the afternoon, even if that's when the light is best for shooting pictures.

But regardless of the hour, photographs of female camp residents are especially unwelcome. The few young girls seen running about are skittish and run away at the sight of the camera. Women in the area sometimes yelled at Muheisen to leave, and men argued with him.

His response was calm and simple: He talked with them, explaining to the elders who he was and what he was doing, saying he wanted to show their situation to the world.

His repeated visits and reassurances over six months finally broke through their suspicion.

"With time I managed to become invisible," he told Santana, "a friendly face instead of a stranger who just comes to snap pictures and vanishes after."

His photos are classic in their simplicity and power. Each presents a single child, some as young as 6, or perhaps an older sibling holding a younger one, most looking directly at the camera. A viewer immediately notices the tatters in their brightly colored clothes, the smudges on their faces, and, above all, their eyes.

In Britain, The Guardian photo editor, Fiona Shields, explained why her paper ran one of the photos on the front page: "We chose that child for the extraordinary depth of expression in her eyes."

In Time magazine, which showcased the photo gallery in its Lightbox features, Muheisen himself was quoted as saying:

"Their tough life makes them look older and react as elderly people, but their innocence is right there in their eyes."

<http://lightbox.time.com/2014/01/28/muhammed-muheisens-portraits-of-young-afghan-refugees/?iid=lb-gal-viewagn#1>

He added that photographing the children singly and up close was a way of refocusing the image of Afghan refugees, legions of whom have been displaced by wars for decades. "By portraying each child, instead of being called 'The Afghan refugee boy and girl,' they will be called and remembered by their names," he said.

Readers around the world got the message. As the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees tweeted:

"Faces of war - deeply moving gallery of #Afghan #refugee children from @Muheisen81 - goo.gl/n78Dfr
pic.twitter.com/Hk4lqmQnFK

For surmounting major access hurdles to showcase those living with the consequences of war, Santana and Muheisen win this week's \$500 prize.

Others whose work impressed the judges:

_ Glian Flaccus, correspondent, Orange County, Calif., for capturing a cultural phenomenon that nobody else had chronicled: toddlers obsessed with taking selfies on smartphones. She noticed it, chronicled it and explained it. Lots of moms and dads of little kids had seen this; nobody had thought to curate the experience. NBC's "Today" show tweeted the story and invited viewers to send in toddler selfies, then included a prominent on-air shoutout to the AP in a TV segment the next day.

<http://t.co/2GpSiC5ZeQ>.

_ Ray Henry and Jeff Martin, newsmen, and John Bazemore, photographer, Atlanta; Jay Reeves, correspondent, Birmingham, Ala.; and freelance photographers Dave Tulis in Atlanta and Butch Dill from Birmingham, for overcoming logistical hurdles to capture the human drama of a winter storm that crippled parts of the South: students hunkering down in schools, motorists stuck all night on highways, and elected officials issuing mea culpas. Tulis, called out at 6 a.m., took two hours to go 1.6 miles because of the ice.

<http://news.yahoo.com/modest-snowfall-creates-chaos-atlanta-stranding-thousands-drivers-032845315.html>

_ Kevin Freking, newsman, Washington, for exclusively obtaining and reporting on more than 100 pages of confidential medical records for the gunman who killed 12 people in last year's rampage at Washington's Navy Yard. They showed that he convinced Veterans Affairs doctors in the weeks before the shootings that he had no mental health issues despite disturbing problems and encounters with police during the same period.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/gunmans-doctor-before-rampage-no-problem-there/2014/01/31/70d79abe-8a53-11e3-a760-a86415d0944d_story.html

_ Jennifer Kelleher, newswoman, Honolulu, for analyzing a year's worth of lobbyist disclosures and finding that 90 percent of lobbyists reported zero expenditures in the state, palpably false. Kelleher's story highlighted how the state's lobbying disclosure system is among the weakest in the nation.

<http://goo.gl/DRxrdd>

_ Rachel La Corte, correspondent, Olympia, Wash., for reporting that Washington state officials would change execution procedures and allow witnesses to see the entire process, including the insertion of intravenous catheters during a lethal injection. Her APNewsBreak came through dogged pursuit of interviews with corrections officials.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2014/01/29/3900845/apnewsbreak-wash-to-increase-execution.html>

_ Brian Skoloff, newsman, Phoenix, for an APNewsBreak that the legal bills for Jodi Arias' murder trial had topped \$2

million. Skoloff's persistence paid off when the county spokeswoman gave him the numbers, left work and turned off her phone.

<http://www.azcentral.com/community/mesa/free/20140127mesa-jodi-arias-trial-defense-costs-taxpayers.html>

_ Ben Nuckols, newsmann, Mid-Atlantic/Washington, for using Freedom of Information Act documents to show that District of Columbia school system leaders did little to check out a claim that administrators were changing students' answers on standardized tests.

<http://bit.ly/1bWdErv>

_ Jeff Baenen, newsman, Minneapolis, for landing an exclusive interview with 1960s pop idol Bobby Vee. After Vee announced he had Alzheimer's disease, Baenen pursued the interview with Vee's family for more than a year before they agreed to let him go on camera.

<http://bit.ly/1k4P8wj>

<http://www.usatoday.com/videos/life/2014/01/31/5081355/>

_ Derrik J. Lang, entertainment writer, Los Angeles, for reporting exclusively that Scarlett Johansson was ending her role as global ambassador for Oxfam International after being criticized for her support of the Israeli company SodaStream, which operates a plant in an Israeli settlement in the West Bank.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/01/29/scarlett-johansson-oxfam_n_4692426.html

_ David Eggert, correspondent, Lansing, Mich., for exclusively reporting details of Gov. Rick Snyder's proposed school budget four days before he delivered it to lawmakers. K-12 funding is a major issue in this year's gubernatorial race. The story, based partly on an interview with the governor, received front page play in the Detroit News.

<http://bit.ly/1fTIP9D>

_ David Sharp, correspondent, Portland, Maine, for an APNewsBreak on the release of 911 transcripts in the still unsolved 2-year-old case of a missing toddler. It was the first test of a recent court ruling that requires police to turn over the transcripts unless there's a compelling reason not to.

http://www.kjonline.com/news/Transcripts_detail_Justin_DiPietro_s_911_call_reporting_Ayla_Reynolds_missing_.html

_ Rob Harris, sports writer, London, for reporting that European soccer's governing body would determine if questionable bookkeeping by Manchester City complied with the "Financial Fair Play" rule for competing in the Champions League. Harris delved into Man City's detailed accounts after it announced that annual losses had been cut in half, even as it continued to spend heavily on players. Harris discovered a \$40 million-plus payment from a company linked to City, which saw its own new New York team buying the right to use City's branding.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2014/01/29/3900370/man-city-posts-loss-of-more-than.html>

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