

---

**From:** Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 14, 2014 9:46 AM  
**To:** stevenspl@live.com  
**Subject:** Connecting - June 14, 2014

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)



# Connecting

June 14, 2014

Click [here](#) for sound of the Teletype



## Remembering Ye Olde Editor

Colleagues,

On the eve of my first Father's Day without my father, who died last July, memories of growing up in the family of a small-town newspaper editor are many. And they are fond.

I called him Ye Olde Editor in his later years - always guaranteeing a smile, even in those last months when his 96-year-old mind and body were shutting down.

My brother Dave and I made our first income as paperboys for The Messenger in Fort Dodge, Iowa, where he was editor for more than a half-century, back in those days when smaller dailies were delivered in the afternoon, inside the front door, mind you, and when you would collect the 40-cent weekly subscription fee by going door to door Thursday nights. I remember dad was involved once when a subscriber was belligerent to me for some reason on collection night. Dad came with me to his door, gave the customer that stern no-nonsense look of his, and he paid up.



I remember nights at the dinner table when dad would get a call from a subscriber who missed their newspaper. Dad would excuse himself, get in the family car and deliver our own paper in person.

My sister Jan recalls long waits in the alley next to The Messenger for dad to leave work, sitting in our lone family car while he finished an editorial or story. On nights when dad had the car to himself, he would always call mom before leaving the office to see what he needed to pick up at the grocery store. Most often, it was a head of lettuce.

Dave and I both worked nights on the sports desk of The Messenger, taking scores and writing stories under sports editor Bob Brown, and occasionally getting out to cover a game. It was great experience for us

both, and the money always helped. Jan worked a summer as a fill-in proofreader at The Messenger.

Our mom was no shrinking violet and a former proofreader at the Cedar County News, in Hartington, Nebraska, where she and dad met, and she was always quick to point out any errors in each day's Messenger and share them with her captive audience - dad. She was seldom wrong.

Dad's hearing declined in recent years - maybe it was selective at times, I don't know - but I recall at mom's funeral service two years ago, after the pastor gave a wonderful eulogy, dad leaned over to me and said, "Paul, do you think we need to give a rebuttal?"

I followed dad into the journalism profession. My brother Dave went into business and my sister Jan became a teacher, retiring recently after a 44-year career.

Dad continued to be my True North in my 36-year career with The Associated Press. He was always there for advice, and when I got my first bureau chief job, dad wrote me a three-page letter with suggestions from the view of an editor who had worked with many AP chiefs. I referred to it often throughout my career. I have it here at my desk as I write this. When I took early retirement at age 62, dad was happy for me, but in the next breath called me a slacker!

Two of my most favorite moments with dad were working with him to co-author a 150-year history of The Messenger, and sitting side by side at a book signing back in 2006. His hands wouldn't allow him to sign that many books by that time, so his publisher Larry Bushman made up a signature stamp. The other came four years later, when dad and I took an Honor Flight May 1, 2010, with 100 of his Fort Dodge-area veterans to Washington to see the World War II Memorial. What a magical time to be with this Army veteran of 33 months World War II combat and other members of The Greatest Generation.

My brother and I visited dad's old second-floor corner office in The Messenger the day after he died. It's now called the "Walter B. Stevens Conference Room". Our procession from the church to the cemetery on the day of his funeral passed by that office to give dad one last look at the place where he worked his journalistic magic for many decades.

We were privileged to be his children.

-0-

If you would like to share memories of your dad, send them along to Connecting and I will publish early next week.

Meantime, I thought my Connecting colleagues would enjoy this column by Laurie Roberts of azcentral.com in Phoenix, spotted and shared on Facebook by Kansas City newswoman **Margaret Stafford**, who like Laurie lost her father 10 years ago.

For all of you with fathers still with you, cherish each day you're together. For those who have lost their dads, remember and honor their memories.

Paul

## **Good dads never really die**

**By Laurie Roberts**

She was 4 years old and standing at the end of the diving board, wanting to take that next step but scared even so.

"Jump," he said, as he treaded water below. "I'll catch you."

So she did.

She was 18 and standing amid a pile of pink luggage in her new dorm room, wanting to take that next step but scared even so.

"Go on," he said, as he gave her a hug and headed to the door. "I'm only a phone call away."

So she did.

She was 22 and standing at the back of a church in white lace and satin, wanting to take that next step but scared even so.

"Hold on," he said, as he offered his arm. "I won't let go."

And he didn't.

Not that day and not in all the days and years that followed. Not even now.

Good dads are like that. They are always there, celebrating a daughter and helping her through the hard stuff, making it all seem so simple if you just hold on.

He was there when she accidentally burned out the transmission on his car and when she accidentally set fire to the garage. (He was also there

she accidentally took a chunk out of the garage while backing out but he was a tad angry that time, so it doesn't count.)

He was there when she took the bus home from college and wound up in the wrong state. She called him late at night and of course he came for her. Then he turned it into an adventure and never mind the food poisoning he picked up along the way home.

He was there when she was stranded on the freeway, never mentioning the fact that he was at work on the other side of town or that there is such a thing as AAA.

He was there for every scary moment in her life and for every joyous moment and for most of the moments in between.

Then, 10 years ago today, suddenly he wasn't there anymore. There was grief early on, and a fear that the relentless forward march of time would carry us farther and farther apart. The world moves on, after all, and it's painful still that he isn't here to see it.

But 10 years later, here are the things that she has learned.

Mostly, that the best fathers aren't remembered for the big things they do. Instead, it's a lifetime's worth of little things they do together that become the biggest thing of all.

The best moments, it turns out, are the ordinary ones.

His wonder at the blue hibiscus that she grew in the Arizona heat when he never could. His delight in the stories that she wrote and the profession that they shared. The sweetness of an evening walk, arm in arm, talking about anything or sometimes nothing at all. The chance to watch him once she had children of her own, to see once again just how special it is to have a man such as this in a child's life -- even when the child is now a woman.

It's been 10 years since cancer claimed her father, but he still drops by now and then.

She sees him in her sister's smile.

She hears him when she writes something that is particularly good - or particularly bad.

She feels his delight in the tomatoes she tries to grow and his chuckle at the birds that claim every blasted last one of them.

She thinks of him when she sees a hibiscus in bloom or the cut of the mountains he loved against the desert sky at sunset.

Or the sight of any man with a well-loved and oh-so-lucky daughter.

And so she stands here, at the end of a decade without him, blessed and grateful and ready for all the next steps that will come in her life because she knows now what she couldn't possibly have understood 10 years ago -- that a part of him is here still.

Good dads, you see, never really die. They are with you always.

All those years she thought she was wrapping him around her little finger? Turns out he was wrapping himself around her heart.

## **Dads as Journalists: Keeping the Focus on Family**

COLLEGE PARK, Md. - Can you be a journalist and a dad at the same time? If you talk to some of our Philip Merrill College of Journalism faculty, adjuncts and staff, the answer is clear. Journalism is a great job but being a dad is more important. Family is more important.

Click [here](#) for the story.



### **Connecting wishes Happy Birthday**

To

[Tom Larimer](#)

[Bill Handy](#)

### **Connecting mailbox**

**I was one of Marty's carrier pigeons**

[Rick Cooper](#) - I had to laugh when I read about Marty Lederhandler's "D-Day carrier pigeons in Connecting.

Forty years later Marty was still using the same method to get film back to AP headquarters, only this time I was the carrier pigeon. I was on my way back to 50 Rock from a meeting with the AP's health insurance carrier. There was police and fire activity due to a fire in Grand Central Terminal that had shut down Lexington Avenue at 42nd Street. As I made my way westward across 42nd Street trying to avoid the congestion I ran into Marty with his usual load of camera equipment.

Seeing me, Marty asked me if I was on my way back to the office and would I mind taking some things back to Photos for him. (It was still the age of film.) He said to tell them he was going to see if he could get a couple of more shots, could they start processing the film and he'd be back at 50 Rock in about a half hour.

He handed me a bag with several rolls of film and handwritten notes and off I went like his carrier pigeons at Normandy, only I made it back to headquarters unscathed.

### **Kudos to Richard Pyle**

[Marty Thompson](#) - Thanks for sharing Richard Pyle's story about Marty Lederhandler in yesterday's "Connecting." It was inspiring to work around and know Marty, and Richard's story serves as a reminder of what a fine man and professional he was. Richard captured that in a way that brings Marty's spirit to life today.

## **Stories of interest**

### **[Nieman Week in Review: Time Inc. tries to survive on its own, and the global shift to mobile news](#)**

This week's essential reads: The most important pieces to read this week are the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism's online news consumption study, Ken Doctor on Time Inc.'s strategy, and The Atlantic's Alexis Madrigal on method journalism.

-0-

### **[For millennials, O.J. Simpson spectacle was trial of 'last' century](#)** (Mark Mittelstadt)

For generations of Americans, the trial of football legend [O.J. Simpson](#) for the murder of his ex-wife and her companion 20 years ago Friday is an indelible memory, filled with unforgettable characters, a raft

of quotable lines and searing images, and a remember-exactly-where-you-were moment when the jury's stunning "not guilty" verdict came down.

Not for all generations, however.

-0-

### [The Obama Administration Has Been Quietly Telling Local Police Forces Not to Tell You About This](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Obama administration has been quietly advising local police not to disclose details about surveillance technology they are using to sweep up basic cellphone data from entire neighborhoods, The Associated Press has learned. Citing security reasons, the U.S. has intervened in routine state public records cases and criminal trials regarding use of the technology. This has resulted in police departments withholding materials or heavily censoring documents in rare instances when they disclose any about the purchase and use of such powerful surveillance equipment.

-0-

### [The 60-second interview: Erik Wemple, Washington Post media critic](#)

CAPITAL: What's the biggest difference between the D.C. and New York media?

WEMPLE: Well, New York journalists are self-involved, thin-skinned and workaholics, whereas D.C. journalists are self-involved, thin-skinned and workaholics. Actually, one difference might be that New York journos are a bit nastier to each other than are D.C. journos, but that might just be me overlaying well-traded D.C.-N.Y. stereotypes onto the topic.

-0-

### [Pressure, potential for a federal shield law](#)

Though last week the Supreme Court refused New York Times journalist James Risen's appeal that he should not be made to testify in a government leak prosecution, efforts to pass a federal media shield law are gathering steam.

-0-

[Michael Hastings's Widow Discusses 'The Last Magazine'](#) (Latrice Davis/Facebook)

Elise Jordan curled her petite frame into the sofa in her sunny

apartment in TriBeCa and kept her voice steady as she explained why she pushed to publish the unfinished novel of her husband, Michael Hastings, on the first anniversary of his death.

-0-

### [CNN 'documentary' on George H.W. Bush paid for by Bush Library Foundation](#)

I am not looking to make a big deal out of this, but I thought at least one mainstream media critic ought to point out that CNN plans to air what it's calling a "documentary" about George H.W. Bush Sunday night in prime time, starting at 9. Except it's not a documentary as the word is used to describe the work of a filmmaker like Ken Burns or Frederick Wiseman. It's not even a documentary as the word might be used to describe an extended report of 30 minutes or so about a historic building airing on your hometown TV news station. This is two hours of hagiography paid for by the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation. One of its two producers, Mary Kate Cary, is a former speechwriter for Bush when he was in the White House.

-0-

### [Colorado papers form digital syndicate](#)

How do you create more, higher quality content with a smaller, busier staff? - Here's a riddle that haunts modern newsrooms across the country: How do you create more, higher quality content with a smaller, busier staff? - We've set out to answer that question.

-0-

### [Mercury News announces move to downtown San Jose](#)

SAN JOSE -- In an announcement that cheered city leaders, the Mercury News said Thursday it is returning to downtown San Jose, bringing a signature business and another burst of economic activity to the city's revitalized core.

-0-

### [Chelsea Clinton paid \\$600K by NBC](#)

Chelsea Clinton earned an annual salary of \$600,000 at NBC News before switching to a month-to-month contract earlier this year, sources with knowledge of the agreement told POLITICO this week.

Paul Stevens  
Connecting newsletter  
[stevenspl@live.com](mailto:stevenspl@live.com)

[Forward this email](#)



*Try it FREE today.*

This email was sent to [stevenspl@live.com](mailto:stevenspl@live.com) by [stevenspl@live.com](mailto:stevenspl@live.com) |  
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).  
Connecting newsletter | 14719 W 79th Ter | Lenexa | KS | 66215