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**From:** Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 11, 2014 8:54 AM  
**To:** stevenspl@live.com  
**Subject:** Connecting - July 11, 2014

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# Connecting

July 11, 2014

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of the Teletype



Colleagues,

Good morning! Here are some items of interest including a full Connecting mailbox.

Paul

## Pranked: The Osn

[Mike Holmes](#) - My best prank wasn't pulled on an AP colleague but, I'm proud to say, on a UPI competitor.

Very early in my career, while I was working in Des Moines, President Jimmy Carter visited Iowa. He planned to overnight at a farm where he'd spent many nights while practically living in Iowa before the 1976 caucuses.

The AP's traveling White House reporters weren't interested in watching Carter walk into a farmhouse, so I got the assignment. They bused a pool of mostly local reporters out to the farm south of Des Moines to await Carter's arrival. No cell phones, of course, and our only way to communicate was a pair of temporary phones that had been wired up to a phone pole at the far end of the farmyard.



Carter arrived about 9:30 p.m., his famous suit bag slung over his shoulder. The farm couple allowed us all inside for a few minutes to talk with them and with the president. Nothing heavy, but it turned into a nice feature story. I slipped out before the session ended and ran the 50 yards to those phones. My UPI counterpart hung back, apparently hoping to score one exclusive quote.

Turned out, only one of the telephones worked. The second one was dead. I quickly dictated a lead, then tossed the working phone into a nearby bush. As the UPI guy approached, I feigned frustration and slammed the receiver down. "Doesn't work," I told him. He tried, too, but couldn't get a dial tone.

We bused back to our respective bureaus, which took about 45 minutes. By then, our lead was on the wire and newspaper deadlines were fast approaching. The next morning, AP won the play in a shutout.

*(Mike is a three-decade veteran of AP who is editorial page editor of the Omaha World-Herald.)*

## Connecting mailbox

## **This presentation was a history lesson**

[Bob Daugherty](#) - I must have given a presentation with slides to 15 different local civic groups dealing with my AP career since retiring. It's usually the Kiwanis, Rotary, etc. On Thursday I had a different sort of audience. They were a room full of 16-18 year-olds ( boys and girls) in orange and white striped prison suits at the Hamilton County (IN) Youth Detention Center's school, which included an armed guard. One small problem was that the bulk of my images were made before they were born. I simply announced that they should just consider this a history lesson. They were studying the Cold War. Fortunately, I had a couple of images of Reagan and Gorbachev.

## **Remembering John Bremner**

[Mike Tharp](#)- Was personally and professionally fascinated by the lovely tribute to John Bremner. I was in his Editing class at KU in 1971-72, and not a week goes by that I don't apply one of his rules or common sense use of words. He once told us: "Most people think in paragraphs. A few think in sentences. Even fewer think in individual words." Once, in class, he and I got into a metaphysical discussion about how the word "gray" (nodding to AP style) should be spelled. Dr. Bremner and I agreed that we thought "grey" better captured the word's essence. That led another graduate student to ask: "What in the hell are you two talking about?" Dr. Bremner and I knew. I've got an autographed copy of his other book, "HTK," and treasure the dedication: "To one of my best ever." I doubt that--but he surely was.

## **Teaching the game of baseball**

[Les Weatherford](#) - This summer I was a bench coach for a 10- to 12-year-old boys baseball team in east Kansas City. The program, Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI), is run by the Boys & Girls Clubs and is affiliated with the Royals and Major League Baseball. My team was mostly walk-ons and castoffs, and some of them had never had a hand in a mitt and were afraid of the ball. We started in April with only four kids and didn't have a full squad until the weekend before our first game at the end of May. We went 2-9, with 7 rainouts, but two of our losses were by one run, and we got beat by the mercy rule only once, our first game. And when you win only two games, each victory is like game 7 of the World Series.

All in all, a very rewarding experience. I can't describe the pride I felt when I saw a kid I coached catch a fly ball for the first time!

## **More on that elusive pica pole**

[Ted Anthony](#) - I brought Jim Bagby's pica pole to Thailand and Laos in 2000 to photograph it at Peg Coughlin's request. But I swear I gave it back.

That said, now that I'm back in Bangkok, I'll keep my eyes peeled.

### **Who will play Lou Boccardi?**

That's a question [Larry Blasko](#) posed, following reports that Robert Redford will play former CBS journalist Dan Rather in the forthcoming movie "Truth," about the controversy surrounding Rather's 2004 report that former President George W. Bush received special treatment while in the National Guard. Cate Blanchett is reportedly set to play Rather's producer Mary Mapes, whose 2005 memoir is the basis of the screenplay.

In 2004, Rather reported for "60 Minutes II" that he had documents alleging that former President Bush received preferential treatment during his Vietnam-era service in the Texas Air National Guard. After intense scrutiny over the validity of the documents, the network conceded that they could not be authenticated. CBS fired three news executives and Mapes for "rushing" the report on air. Soon after, Rather stepped down as CBS' news anchor and left the network in 2006. He sued the network the following year over his treatment in the aftermath of the report, though the case was thrown out of court.

CBS named former Pennsylvania governor and U.S. Attorney General Richard Thornburgh and AP's former president and CEO **Lou Boccardi** to an independent panel to probe the story. Their report criticized both the initial CBS news segment and CBS' "strident defense" during the aftermath. The panel did not specifically consider whether the documents were forgeries but concluded that the producers had failed to authenticate them and cited "substantial questions regarding the authenticity of the Killian documents."

## **Recommended reading**

[The Myth of America's Golden Age](#) (Ed Staats/Facebook)

I hadn't realized when I was growing up in Gary, Indiana, an industrial town on the southern shore of Lake Michigan plagued by discrimination, poverty and bouts of high unemployment, that I was living in the golden era of capitalism. It was a company town, named after the chairman of the board of U.S. Steel. It had the world's largest integrated steel mill and a progressive school system designed to turn Gary into a melting pot fed by migrants from all over Europe. But by the time I was born in 1943, cracks in the pot were already appearing. To break strikes-to ensure that workers did not fully share in the productivity gains being driven by modern technology-the big steel companies brought African-American workers up from the South who lived in impoverished, separate neighborhoods.



## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday

To

[Kelly Kissel](#)

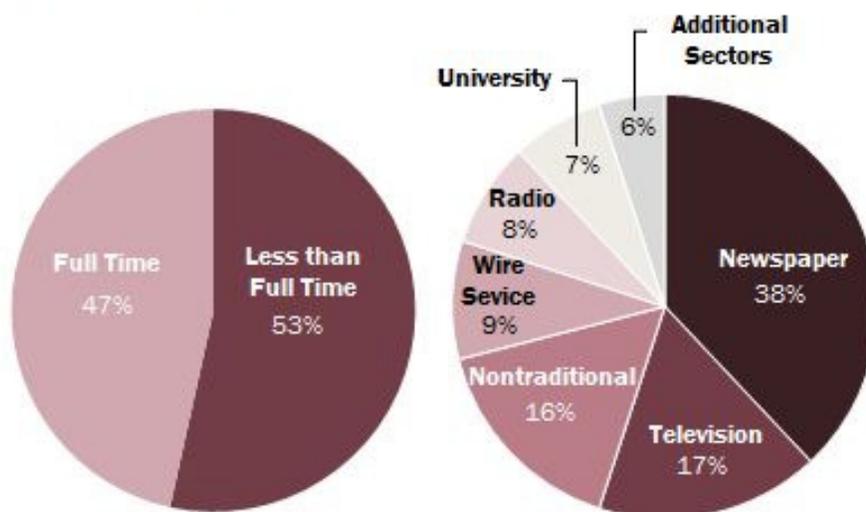
## Other items of interest

[America's Shifting Statehouse Press](#) (Mark Mittelstadt)

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### Who Reports from U.S. Statehouses?

*% of all statehouse reporters*



Note: The "less than full time" category includes part-time, students (temp.), reporters working during session only and other staff such as interns and videographers. Additional sectors represent the following: professional publications, multi-platform media companies and "other," which includes freelancers, magazines and alternative weeklies. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

N=1,592

Source: Pew Research Data Aug. 2013 to March 2014.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

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Within America's 50 state capitol buildings, 1,592 journalists inform the public about the actions and issues of state government, according to new data from the Pew Research Center.

**In this story is this segment regarding AP:**

Wire services assign a total of 139 staffers to statehouses, representing 9% of all the reporters at the capitol buildings. The vast majority of full-time wire service reporters (69 of 91) work for the Associated Press. Although the wire service reduced statehouse staffing during the recession, the AP is now increasing the size of some of its capitol bureaus.

Reaction from Connecting colleague [Scott Charton](#): As an AP veteran still pulling for the home team, I was pleased to see this: *With the improvement of the economy and under the guidance of Gary Pruitt, who became AP's president and CEO in July 2012, the AP Board of Directors identified state news, in general, and statehouse coverage, in particular, as "a major priority" for 2014, Carovillano said. As a result, he added, "we are hiring a number of political and state government reporters this year."*

AND

**[Pew study: New media outlets attempt to fill void in statehouse coverage across the U.S.](#)**



The Georgia state legislature passed 322 bills during its 2014 legislative session that ended in March. From a bill that eased restrictions on guns in churches, bars, and schools to one that would require some food-stamp recipients to take drug tests, much of the legislation that passed will directly impact the lives of Georgia's 10 million residents.

Despite the importance of what transpired at the statehouse, there were only 17 full-time reporters covering the legislature, according to a study released this morning by the Pew Research Center examining changes among the statehouse press corps across the United States. (File photo: President Carter addresses Georgia legislature.)

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**[What does a post-broadcast world mean for public media?](#)**

The era of the couch potato is fading fast. Even after a long day's work, many of us would much rather take out our smartphones, tablets and laptops and hang out with friends on Facebook, listen to a podcast while cooking dinner and watch short

videos on YouTube rather than veg out in front of the TV.

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### [Chinese Journalists Warned Not to Work With Foreign Media](#)

The Chinese government, which already maintains tight restrictions on the country's media, has issued new warnings to local journalists not to cooperate with foreign news agencies. The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, which regulates the media, in a notice dated June 30 but posted on its website this week, alerts Chinese journalists not to pass on any information obtained in the course of their work to any foreign media groups or to domestic media where they are not employed, and it re-emphasizes that they are not permitted to write for foreign news agencies.

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### [Ken Doctor: Mind your own business, Facebook and Google](#)

No, Facebook and Google aren't practicing mind control on us, are they? That's just silly. Their business is the highly prosaic selling of advertising, less romantic than Mad Men, more lucrative than Midas. Mind control is just a side pursuit, one of those many auxiliary products in eternal beta, that might turn into something big.

**AND**

### [Jay Rosen to journalists and editors: 'Facebook has all the power. You have almost none'](#)

Amid growing calls for US and UK regulators to launch formal investigations into Facebook's disturbing mood manipulation research, leading US media scholar Jay Rosen has a reminder for journalists, editors and personal social media users alike: "Facebook has all the power. You have almost none."

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### [Israeli airstrike destroys press car, killing Palestinian media worker](#)

The Committee to Protect Journalists condemns the Israel Defense Forces' airstrike on a car clearly marked as a press vehicle in Gaza City on Wednesday. The airstrike killed Hamid Shihab, a driver for the Gaza-based press agency Media 24, according to the agency.

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### [Rumor and Leaks Fill a Void as Israel Silences Press Over Killings](#)

Israeli intelligence officials used gag orders in recent weeks to stifle reporting on the initial investigations into both the abduction and the killing of three Israeli teenagers in the West Bank, and the apparent revenge killing of a Palestinian teenager in East Jerusalem.

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### US given heads up about newspaper data destruction

The Obama administration knew in advance that the British government would oversee destruction of a newspaper's hard drives containing leaked National Security Agency documents last year, newly declassified documents show. The White House had publicly distanced itself on whether it would do the same to an American news organization.

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### Newsosaur: Newspapers Can't Merely Dabble at Digital

The New York Times wrote the story in 1853 about how Solomon Northup was kidnapped and sold into slavery, but Gawker got most of the page views by publicizing the archived article when "12 Years a Slave" won the Oscar for best picture in 2014.

This example of how the Times fails to capitalize on its rich content to build digital readership, relevance and revenues came to light in the leak this spring of a candid, unsettling and must-read assessment of the newspaper's less than elegant effort to pivot from print to pixels.

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### Star Tribune to lose 19 veterans in the newsroom in buyouts triggered by paper's sale

Nineteen veteran journalists at the Star Tribune are taking a buyout and leaving the paper under a contract clause triggered by the closing of the sale of the paper last week to Glen Taylor.

The journalists, members of the Newspaper Guild, took advantage of the union clause that called for up to 26 weeks of severance pay for those leaving upon a sale. They're leaving a newsroom of about 250 people. Most will leave July 18.

**Connecting colleague Dave Pyle, who shared, notes that there are numbers of current and former AP staff who have worked with these people over the years. Included in the list is former AP/Minneapolis staffer Suzanne Ziegler.**

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### Jill Abramson 'still trying to figure out' why she was fired

Jill Abramson, who was abruptly fired as executive editor of The New York Times in May, says she's still trying to figure out the reasons for her termination. "I was fired because of my quote-unquote management skills," Abramson said during a question-and-answer session at the Chautauqua Institution in Chautauqua, N.Y., on Wednesday. "To be honest with you, I'm still trying to figure out exactly what that means."

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### Silently correcting your grammar gifts (Steve Graham)

## And finally...

### A 1976 Chicago Daily News article foresees 'electronic newspapers' (Bob Daugherty)

Dennis Sodomka continues: "You won't have to wait for the nightly television newscast or for the delivery of your paper to get the latest news. It will all be at your fingertips whenever you want it.

"This may sound like a futuristic vision straight out of Star Trek, and most of it, indeed, may be several decades away. But most of the technology is available right now for a totally electronic newspaper."

# Flash Gordon in the newsroom

By Dennis Sodomka

Some day in the not-too-distant future your newspaper may not have any paper in it at all. It may be totally electronic.

Under this system, reporters would type their stories on cathode ray tubes attached to a computer. Editors would write headlines and design pages on a terminal and the computer sends the finished pages to home television screens.

To get your copy of The Daily News, you turn on your television set, tune it to the proper

cable-TV channel and adjust the controls to choose the page you want.

IF YOU WANT to clip out an ad, or send a story to Aunt Minnie, there will be a small printer attached to the set to give you a paper copy of anything you want to keep.

The pages will be changed to accommodate developing stories, so you will always be able to read the most up-to-date news. It will be the ultimate in personalized news delivery.

Paul Stevens

Connecting newsletter

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