
From: Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2014 9:21 AM
To: stevenspl@live.com
Subject: Connecting - July 23, 2014

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Connecting

July 23, 2014

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A kiss, a prayer: The last hours of MH17's victims



The final hours of Malaysia Flight 17's victims are reconstructed by AP reporters worldwide in this story on the wire today:

In a bedroom in a townhouse near Amsterdam, Miguel Panduwinata reached out for his mother. "Mama, may I hug you?"

Samira Calehr wrapped her arms around her 11-year-old son, who'd been oddly agitated for days, peppering her with questions about death, about his soul, about God. The next morning, she would drop Miguel and his big brother Shaka at the airport so they could catch Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, the first leg of their journey to Bali to visit their grandmother.

Her normally cheerful, well-traveled boy should have been excited. His silver suitcase sat in the living room, ready to go. Jetskiing and surfing in paradise awaited. But something was off. A day earlier, while playing soccer, Miguel had burst out: "How would you choose to die? What would happen to my body if I was buried? Would I not feel anything because our souls go back to God?"

And now, the night before his big trip, Miguel refused to release his mother from his grasp.

He's just going to miss me, Calehr told herself. So she stretched out beside him and held him all night.

It was 11 p.m. on Wednesday, July 16. Miguel, Shaka and the 296 other people

aboard Flight 17 had around 15 hours left to live.

Click [here](#) to read more. Shared by Paul Colford.

In the above undated photo released by the Calehr family, Miguel Panduwinata, left, Mika Panduwinata, Samira Calehr, second from right, and Shaka Panduwinata, right, pose for a photo. Shaka Panduwinata and his brother Miguel Panduwinata were killed aboard Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, which was shot down over eastern Ukraine. (AP Photo/The Calehr family)

Denis Gray: A tribute to his father

The father of Connecting colleague [Denis Gray](#) died early this month. Denis shares this obituary he wrote that appeared in the Santa Rosa (California) Press Democrat. The accompanying photo shows his dad last year enjoying some Sonoma Valley wine and food with Denis' wife Sarah. The obituary:

A fighter against the communist regime in his native Czechoslovakia, a crack CIA operative and a vice president of IBM in his adopted country, David Mark Gray passed away in Santa Rosa, California, July 7 at the age of 94.



David was born in 1920 in the then newly independent central European country into a well-established family in the city of Pilsen. His father had fought in World War I on the Allied side. The family survived the Nazi occupation and American bombing of the industrial city.

Following the take-over of the country by a Soviet-backed communist party in 1948, David helped organize an anti-regime, underground movement in his native city. A businessman and a rising young liberal politician, he proved a prime target for the communists, and forewarned of imminent arrest he fled across the Iron Curtain ringing Eastern Europe into West Germany, leaving behind his wife and two children.

He was promptly recruited by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, which in return sent an agent to Pilsen a year later to whisk his family out of the country in a dramatic escape. This was the height of the Cold War, and David helped run agents into Czechoslovakia and engaged in other espionage activities. For

security reasons, the family changed its original name of Mecir to Gray. Ambitious, he knew that as a foreign-born employee he could not in those times rise to the highest positions in the agency. He resigned and despite lacking a foreign degree and an American background, David embarked on a successful business career.

By then a U.S. citizen, he worked for a Swiss typewriter company and was then hired by IBM which sent him to South Africa. From there he rose to positions in the company's European headquarters in Paris and later at head offices in New York City and Armonk, New York. Named a vice president in IBM's office products division, his responsibilities spanned five continents.

He retired after taking part in a White House task force on voluntarism and charitable organizations. He moved to Santa Rosa in 1991 with his lifelong wife Denise. He is survived by daughter Alexandra Creed, an Oakmont resident, and son Denis, a longtime foreign correspondent for the Associated Press based in Bangkok, Thailand. There are four grandchildren.

News of the AP

Eighteen months after dropping AP, Tribune happy with Reuters

When newspaper ad revenues were in free fall in 2008, there was much angry complaining among editors about the high cost and inflexibility of the Associated Press service. At a gripe session in Washington, one editor compared the cooperative to the USSR's politburo. Threats to quit were common.

In the end though, AP cut its rates, offered several levels of service and has retained the great majority of its newspaper members (who also own the cooperative and hold most its board seats).

But there was an exception.

Starting in 2009, Chicago Tribune editor Gerould Kern quietly began working with Reuters to build an acceptable substitute service. Kern told me the Chicago Tribune ran its last AP material in March 2012. With six other Tribune papers (but not the Los Angeles Times), it dropped AP entirely at the start of 2013.

Click [here](#) to read more; shared by Bob Daugherty.

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NY Daily News, Associated Press fall for parody group on Brooklyn Bridge flag story

The New York Daily News reports that a "pro-cycling group" had taken responsibility for having removed American flags atop the towers of the Brooklyn Bridge and replaced them with white flags. That "pro-cycling group," continued the story, was the Bicycle Lobby, which had tweeted: "Earlier today we hoisted two white flags to signal our complete surrender of the Brooklyn Bridge bicycle path to pedestrians."

Click [here](#) to read more.

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NMG members protest as bargaining with AP hits 1-year anniversary

To mark the one-year anniversary of difficult contract talks with The Associated Press, staffers covered by the News Media Guild will participate in multiple protests Tuesday.

Click [here](#) to read more.

More moon-landing memories

[Joe Frazier](#): The moon? I was a Marine Corps corporal in Vietnam working with a civic action project in the village of Phu Hoa west of Dana NGO (DaNang). I had a small transistor radio and was listening to it, live, if I recall, on Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, universally known as AFARTS. There was a pale outline of the moon in a blazing sky. A kid in the village asked what we were so excited about. In my then pretty good French and shaky Vietnamese, I told him. He pointed up. "That ppm (moon)? I nodded, "tai Sao? He asked "why? I f-xxx didn't know what to say.

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[Dave Lubeski](#): I was living in Houston where I worked at a local radio station. It was a Sunday when Armstrong and Aldrin landed and my wife and I were driving around the city with another couple. On the car radio was the live transmission. We believed at the time (it was later disputed) that the first word ever spoken from the surface of the moon was "Houston" as in "Houston, Tranquility Base here, the Eagle has landed." We were so excited that we headed for downtown Houston and the ExxonMobil Building, known then as the Humble Building. We wanted to be as close as possible to the astronauts on the Moon and we ended up getting closer than most people could. At 44 stories it was then the tallest building west of the Mississippi and had an observation deck open to the public on the top floor. We put our quarters in the observation deck telescope and pointed it at the moon. By the time Armstrong took that historic step off the ladder to the surface several hours

later the four of us were back at my apartment watching the grainy telecast on TV. An exhilarating experience.

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[Patrick Kelley](#): I was a photographer at The Emporia Gazette when the Moon landing occurred. My then-wife Milly and I watched on our little black-and-white in our tiny rented farmhouse at the north end of town. Our guest for the evening was a Brit from Kenya, Jeremy Armstrong, who was in Emporia to earn his multi-engine license for his job, which was to seed clouds and break up hail storms before they could damage the tea crop. Jeremy was transfixed by the TV images, whispering "Marvelous, marvelous."



Connecting wishes Happy Birthday

To

[Hank Ackerman](#)

Stories of interest

[Myths and Misreporting About Malaysia Airlines Flight 17](#)

By now you have certainly heard of the luckiest man alive-the flying Dutchman who cheated death twice. Believe it or not, Dutch cyclist Maarten de Jonge was booked on both ill-fated Malaysia Airlines flights, MH17 and MH370-and both times he changed his plans at the last minute, according to [hundreds](#) of [mediastories](#) from [around the world](#) in the past few days. Wolf Blitzer spent several minutes of CNN's *Situation Room* on Monday talking about de Jonge, a professional cyclist for the Terengganu Cycling Team in Malaysia. Some stories noted that de Jonge, in an amazing show of customer loyalty, has no qualms about flying on Malaysia Airlines again.

There's only one problem: There's no evidence that de Jonge ever bought a ticket, or even had a reservation, for either one of the flights. His miraculous

survival is an artifact of the Internet's echo chamber, where freaky news gets amplified beyond all proportion and few bother to check whether it's actually true.

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[Advice from journalists of color: 'Don't sacrifice who you are for where you want to go'](#)

Buzzfeed writers Heben Nigatu and Tracy Clayton asked 20 writers of color for advice for their counterparts who are just beginning their careers in an article published today.

Mostly, the responses emphasized the importance of hard work and building a professional reputation marked by attention to deadlines, creative storytelling and persistence. Among the pieces of advice:

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[War and Media in the Gaza Strip](#) (Latrice Davis/Facebook)

Alleged gunfire at an Al Jazeera bureau in Gaza on Tuesday was hardly a boon to the Israeli Defense Forces' public image - and this was only the latest installment in a string of P.R. debacles facing the Jewish state.

The current conflict in Gaza is playing out on two fronts: one on the ground, spilling more and more blood with each passing day; the other glowing on television screens and flitting across Twitter feeds around the world

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[FoxNews.com falls, USAToday.com rises in consumer satisfaction survey](#)

Fox News' website dropped 7 percent in American Customer Satisfaction Index's annual survey of consumer satisfaction, while USA Today's rose by 4 percent.

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[Pew's Alan Murray will edit Fortune](#)

Alan Murray will leave his post as the president of the Pew Research Center to become the new editor of Fortune, Fortune announced Tuesday. Current Fortune Editor Andy Serwer "is leaving Time Inc.," the release says. Murray left The Wall Street Journal to run Pew in 2012.

And finally...

[George Harrison Memorial Tree killed ... by beetles; replanting due](#)

In the truth is stranger than fiction department, Los Angeles Councilman Tom LaBonge, whose district includes Griffith Park, told Pop & Hiss over the weekend that the pine tree planted in 2004 near Griffith Observatory in memory of George Harrison will be replanted shortly because the original tree died as the result of an insect infestation.

Yes, the George Harrison Tree was killed by beetles.



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