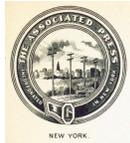


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**From:** Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 13, 2014 9:34 AM  
**To:** stevenspl@live.com  
**Subject:** Connecting - November 13, 2014

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# Connecting

November 13, 2014

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of the Teletype



Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning.

Thanks to my colleague and friend **Mark Mittelstadt** for producing a meaty Connecting for Wednesday that I devoured on our I-35 drive home from Fort Dodge, Iowa, where we took a special veteran and his wife to dinner - Al and Janet Habhab.

Al is shown in the bottom left photo in this special Fort Dodge Messenger Veterans Day display of area veterans:



Seventy years ago, Al Habhab was a 19-year-old Army private when he was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge and earned a Bronze Star for saving the life of a fellow soldier.

When I wrote the life story of Al and his wife Janet, Al observed, "All I can tell you is that I went into the Army on January 25, 1944. I was in Europe in November 1944. I was in the hospital just a few months later. I lived a lifetime in about 10 months. I was just a common ordinary guy. I never thought much about it until my later years. Although (Arthur) Kingsbury (the soldier he saved) states in his letters that I saved his life, I still believe it was divine intervention. I am not and have not pretended to be a hero."

Al returned home, earned a law degree at the University of Iowa (Mark and my alma mater), opened a private practice, served as mayor of Fort Dodge for 14 years, became a district judge and then was chief judge on Iowa's State Court of Appeals. Most importantly, to me, he and Janet were best friends to my parents and his fellow WWII Army friend, my dad (shown in top center row of display above.) The Greatest Generation, indeed.

Appropriately, we begin today's Connecting with a few more memories of military service by Connecting colleagues during this Veterans Day week.

Paul

## More veterans' memories

**Henry Bradsher** ([Email](#)) - In May of 1950, I signed up at the University of Missouri to begin in the autumn taking advanced ROTC, an optional program leading to a commission in the reserves. After the Korean War began that June, this turned out to be a better idea than I'd expected. So when I graduated in 1952, I went on active duty for three years as an Air Force intelligence officer, in the States and Europe.

When I got out, I applied to The AP for a job, specifying that I wanted to be a foreign correspondent. Expecting to go overseas eventually, I did not bother to join the Air Force reserves, as reserve officers are supposed to do.

In 1965, my parents forwarded to me a letter from the Air Force. In the decade since leaving the service, I had failed to become active in the reserves, it said. Unless I promptly joined my nearest reserve unit, I would lose my commission. I wrote back on my AP letterhead that I was now AP bureau chief in Moscow, and where is my nearest reserve unit?

The Air Force's reply was, in effect, forget it. So I guess I lost my commission.

Anyway, I knew that during World War II, American war correspondents were given the military status of majors. Since I'd left active duty as just a first lieutenant, I figured I'd get a de facto promotion -- if I survived the beginning of a war.

-0-

**Jerry Harkavy** ([Email](#)) - I took Army ROTC. After an initial tour at Ft. Holabird, Md., I was sent to Vietnam as head of a five-member public information detachment to serve with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. I was in-country for a bit under a year, because the 23 days spent on a troop ship en route to Vietnam counted as part of my one-year tour. I returned home in January 1968, just a couple of weeks before the big Tet Offensive that changed the course of the war.

The 173rd drew many top reporters and photographers from U.S. and foreign news organizations. One of the many who I got to be friends with had worked for AP in Boston and suggested that I contact the CoB (Jack Simms) about a job when I returned to civilian life. I took his advice, was hired and spent the next 41 years as a newsman in the Portland, Maine bureau.

-0-

**Carl P. Leubsdorf** ([Email](#)) - I volunteered for the Army Reserve, in the pre-Vietnam days of 1961, after being called for a pre-induction physical and found a spot in a public Information unit. I spent six months at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo., most of it in the small PR operation that the publicity-hungry commander of our training regiment had created to put out releases about other reservists with real lives, each one mentioning his name. We also put a monthly regimental newspaper for which I covered softball games

affecting the regiment. A driver several ranks higher than my E2 picked me up, watched the game with me and delivered me back to my unit. During our tenure, the Berlin Wall went up and several colleagues were in units that were activated.

But I was able to go home, after a week of "clearing post" which I mainly spent watching the World Series. Later, I went to the unit's Sunday meetings at which we mainly watched football and went out for meals; I never saw a rifle the whole time. Later, when our unit was disbanded, I was assigned to another which seemed likely to take the duties more seriously so was able to get into a Control Group on grounds my job (with AP) prevented me from going to regular meetings. Then, I got married and acquired four step-children, so I was able to get honorably discharged, still in the rank of E2. Total service time: 2 years, 2 1/2 months.

## Connecting mailbox

**Ferd Kaufman** ([Email](#)) - Since no one noticed the mistake, or I missed it, The Brandenburg Gate was in Berlin the last time I saw it. Not Munich.

-0-

**Peggy Walsh** ([Email](#)) - It was so wonderful to read Linda Deutsch's account of the "Jim Lagier" luncheon. And good to see a picture of many old friends and colleagues.

I also enjoyed the different contributions for Veterans' Day. We all owe a lot to those who have and will serve. It's just too bad we only celebrate them on a couple of days each year.

## Welcome to Connecting



[Morry Gash](#)

[Colleen Barry](#)

[Paula Stone](#)

[Joe Bonney](#)

[Stuart Wilk](#)

(Click on their names if you want to send them an email.)

## Stories of interest

[Reuters sets new limits on story lengths](#) (Doug Pizac)

Reuters news stories will be kept to reduced word counts from Monday.

Editors around the world have agreed the new limits in an attempt to "tighten up the file and give us more room to focus reporting and sub-editing effort on the stories that matter most", as Richard Mably, Europe, Middle East and Africa editor put it.

The new maximum story lengths are

400 words for non-exclusive spot news stories

800 words for insights, exclusives and update/wrap-up trunks on major news stories

2,000 words for special reports.

Exceptions may be granted, but only on rare occasions. Only news editors are authorised to grant exceptions

-0-

[Wall Street Journal to drop Sunday Journal and Wall Street Journal Radio Network](#)

(Bob Daugherty)

Dow Jones CEO William Lewis tells his employees that "it will come as no surprise that in order to do even more, we must do fewer things that are not core to our business so that we can move faster in pursuit of our goals."

Thus, Sunday Journal from The Wall Street Journal "will come to a close over the coming months," and The Wall Street Journal Radio Network "will cease operations at the end of the calendar year."

-0-

## [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel staffers give to United Way via the Guild, not the company](#)

In 2009, journalists at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel started donating to United Way through the Milwaukee Newspaper Guild. "Some people didn't want to give through the company given how the company had forced us to take a pay cut and then laid people off," says local Guild president and Journal Sentinel Packers reporter Tom Silverstein.

-0-

## [New OC Register Publisher Asks Reporters to Give Him One Hour a Week for Customer Service Calls](#)

I'm still researching new-ish Orange County Register publisher Rich Mirman--the former casino executive who came in to clean up Reg owner's Aaron Kushner's mess--before writing anything extensive about him, but Mirman has already offended his newsroom in one big way: He's asking them to step up and become customer service reps for an hour a week.

It's strictly voluntary, mind you, and probably necessary after the fiasco that was Kushner switching delivery drivers and leaving Register subscribers without their daily drivel for weeks at a time (the switch came, of course, because Kushner wasn't paying his bills to his former delivery drivers, the Los Angeles Times). Nevertheless, Mirman's move isn't sitting well with reporters and editors, one whom put it thusly: "Mirman's a moron."

## **AP Beat of the Week**

The outline of the story began to emerge a few months ago as Esther Htusan reported in western Myanmar: State security forces were extorting minority Rohingya Muslims even as they forced them out of the country. But there wasn't enough evidence to publish.

Then, Bangkok bureau chief Todd Pitman requested an interview with a human rights activist ahead of President Barack Obama's visit to the Asian nation formerly called Burma. Over lunch, the activist revealed some details from a forthcoming report that corroborated Htusan's reporting and went even further. There was only one problem: The report was not even finished, and when it was complete, it would be embargoed for use by all media at the same time, essentially rendering Htusan's information moot.

Undeterred, Pitman went to work, negotiating until he got AP early access to the report. Combined with Htusan's reporting, this led to a story showing Myanmar security forces' complicity and profiteering in the Rohingya exodus was far more widespread and organized than previously thought. Pitman and Htusan's exclusive is the Beat of the Week.

The plight of the Muslim minority Rohingya is well known. In one of the largest Asian

boat exodus since the Vietnam War, more than 100,000 Rohingya have fled Myanmar's western shores since Buddhist-Muslim violence erupted in Rakhine state two years ago. Often the refugees travel directly into the hands of waiting transnational criminal networks.

Since being hired a year ago, Htusan has been key to AP reporting on the persecution. Independent newsgathering in Myanmar is tough, and it's even more difficult in the Rohingya part of Rakhine state, which is so isolated there is not even cell phone coverage. Journalists are routinely followed by secret police. After AP Myanmar correspondent Robin McDowell visited the northern town of Maungdaw in 2013, the government essentially banned foreign journalists from going there because they found McDowell's reporting too critical.

As a Myanmar citizen and non-foreigner, Htusan can visit regions that McDowell and others cannot. About two months ago, Htusan went to Rakhine state to report on how and why the Rohingya are leaving. Accompanied by a local cameraman, Htusan stayed for four days with a Rohingya family she knew from a previous trip. The AP journalists, possibly seen as visiting relatives, attracted no attention from authorities, even though a small police post was just 10 yards away.

Htusan found people eager to talk, but afraid, so interviews were conducted inside homes. They kept doors and windows closed. Htusan found individual examples of Myanmar authorities colluding in the forced exodus and taking money from refugees, but nothing connecting that to a widespread problem.

The reporting stayed in Htusan's notebook until Pitman's lunch with the human rights activist, a source he had cultivated with periodic meetings over meals or coffee. As Pitman heard descriptions of the situation - Myanmar naval boats were escorting refugees out to sea, and the police, army and navy were extracting payments along the way - he knew it was a strong, previously unreported story. Pitman asked his source for permission to publish a story as soon as possible, and he made sure to mention the reach of AP around the world. After checking with his organization's board, the activist said no: They didn't want to annoy other journalists or show favoritism. The embargo stood.

But after cajoling an advance copy of the report and studying it, Pitman again proposed publishing something early, suggesting various timing options \_ and again stressing AP's broad distribution and potential impact. This time, the answer came back yes.

Pitman spoke with McDowell, who pointed out the crucial fact that that Htusan's reporting could independently corroborate the report. Pitman and Htusan's resulting story was unmatched by any competitor until the next day.

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/ap-exclusive-myanmar-aiding-rohingya-trafficking-26726296>

For their intrepid reporting, steady source work and insistent pressure to expose a human rights tragedy, Pitman and Htusan share this week's \$500 prize.

# Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Nov. 13, the 317th day of 2014. There are 48 days left in the year.

## Today's Highlights in History:

On Nov. 13, 1974, Karen Silkwood, a 28-year-old technician and union activist at the Kerr-McGee Cimarron plutonium plant near Crescent, Oklahoma, died in a car crash while on her way to meet a reporter. In Amityville on Long Island, New York, six members of the DeFeo family were shot and killed in their home by eldest son Ronald DeFeo, Jr. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat addressed the U.N. General Assembly, the first representative of a non-governmental entity to do so. Italian film director and actor Vittorio De Sica, 73, died in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France.

## On this date:

In 1789, Benjamin Franklin wrote in a letter to a friend, Jean-Baptiste Leroy: "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."

In 1849, voters in California ratified the state's original constitution.

In 1909, 259 men and boys were killed when fire erupted inside a coal mine in Cherry, Illinois.

In 1927, the Holland Tunnel opened to the public, providing access between lower Manhattan and New Jersey beneath the Hudson River.

In 1937, the NBC Symphony Orchestra, formed exclusively for radio broadcasting, made its debut.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a measure lowering the minimum draft age from 21 to 18.

In 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down laws calling for racial segregation on public city and state buses.

In 1969, speaking in Des Moines, Iowa, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew accused network television news departments of bias and distortion, and urged viewers to lodge complaints.

In 1971, the U.S. space probe Mariner 9 went into orbit around Mars.

In 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, designed by Maya Lin, was dedicated on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

In 1989, Polish labor leader Lech Walesa (lek vah-WEN'-sah) received the Medal of Freedom from President George H.W. Bush during a White House ceremony.

In 1994, Sweden voted in a non-binding referendum to join the European Union, which it did the following year.

Ten years ago: U.S. military officials said American troops had occupied the entire Iraqi city of Fallujah. Vice President Dick Cheney went to a hospital after experiencing shortness of breath; tests found nothing wrong. Rapper O.D.B. (real name: Russell Jones), a founding member of the Wu-Tang Clan, collapsed and died inside a recording studio in New York City two days before his 36th birthday. Harry Lampert, the illustrator who helped create the DC Comics superhero The Flash, died in Boca Raton, Florida, at age 88.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama, in Tokyo at the start of a weeklong trip to Asia, said his decision about how many troops to send to Afghanistan would come soon and that he was bent on "getting this right." U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder announced a decision to bring professed 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four others detained at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to trial in lower Manhattan (this plan was later dropped). Scientists said analysis of data from two NASA spacecraft that were intentionally crashed into the moon showed ample water near the lunar south pole.

One year ago: The Obama administration revealed that just 26,794 people had enrolled for health insurance during the first, flawed month of operations for the federal "Obamacare" website. (More than 79,000 others had signed up in the 14 states with their own websites.) Toronto Mayor Rob Ford admitted during a heated City Council meeting that he'd bought illegal drugs while in office, but he adamantly refused calls from councilors to step down and seek help. Clayton Kershaw of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Max Scherzer of the Detroit Tigers won baseball's Cy Young Awards. Former Raiders tight end Todd Christensen died during liver transplant surgery in Utah; he was 57.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Madeleine Sherwood is 92. Journalist-author Peter Arnett is 80. Producer-director Garry Marshall is 80. Actor Jimmy Hawkins is 73. Country singer-songwriter Ray Wylie Hubbard is 68. Actor Joe Mantegna is 67. Actress Sheila Frazier is 66. Actress Frances Conroy is 61. Musician Andrew Ranken (The Pogues) is 61. Actress Tracy Scoggins is 61. Actor Chris Noth (nonth) is 60. Actress-comedian Whoopi Goldberg is 59. Actor Rex Linn is 58. Actress Caroline Goodall is 55. Actor Neil Flynn is 54. Former NFL quarterback Vinny Testaverde is 51. Rock musician Walter Kibby (Fishbone) is 50. Comedian Jimmy Kimmel is 47. Actor Steve Zahn is 47. Actor Gerard Butler is 45. Writer-activist Ayaan Hirsi Ali is 45. Actor Jordan Bridges is 41. Actress Aisha Hinds is 39. Rock musician Nikolai Fraiture is 36. NBA All-Star Metta World Peace (formerly Ron Artest) is 35. Actress Monique Coleman is 34.

***Thought for Today: "If we like a man's dream, we call him a reformer; if we don't like his dream, we call him a crank." - William Dean Howells, American author (1837-***

1920).

Paul Stevens  
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