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**From:** Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 22, 2014 9:03 AM  
**To:** stevenspl@live.com  
**Subject:** Connecting - December 22, 2014

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# Connecting

December 22, 2014

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning - and here's to a great week ahead.

Today's Connecting carries the sad news of the death of **Mike Mokrzycki**, founding director of the Associated Press Polling Unit, who died Friday at his home at the age of 52.

Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

And this edition includes a thank-you note to her Connecting colleagues from **Linda Deutsch**, AP special correspondent and Los Angeles-based courts reporter who retires today after a distinguished 48-year career with The Associated Press.

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*"Your cancer is in remission."*

There are at least two people in our world who got that wonderful news over the weekend - one is famed 74-year-old NBC journalist **Tom Brokaw**, the other spunky Kansas City-area 7-year old **Noah Wilson**. I've never met Tom Brokaw, but I have met Noah, who is in my daughter Molly's first-grade class. I am thrilled for their news, maybe the best Christmas present anyone fighting the disease can receive.



Click [here](#) for a link to Brokaw's statement to his NBC colleagues.

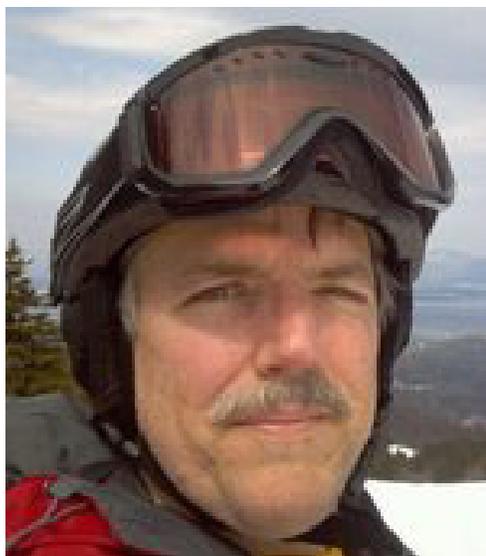
And click [here](#) for a link to a story on Noah's "Christmas miracle."

Paul

## Mike Mokrzycki: An intense zest for living

*Here is the obituary for Mike, who worked for the AP from 1985 to 2009. I am told his wife Jill is also a journalist and this remarkable account of his life no doubt was touched by her writing skills.*

Michael J. Mokrzycki died unexpectedly at his home in West Newbury (Massachusetts) on Friday evening, December 19, after living life as fully as anyone could in 52 years. He was the loving husband of Jill Gambon, with whom he shared 21 years of marriage, and the devoted father of Brady and Connor Mokrzycki.



In his 52 years, Mike engaged fully with the world; his natural curiosity about nearly anything led him to the perfect career as an award-winning news reporter and editor for the Associated Press for a quarter-century. Mike was born on November 11, 1962, the only child of the late Walter and Frances (Koscielny)

Mokrzycki, and was raised in the Maspeth section of Queens in New York City. His upbringing gave him the particular intensity common to the native New Yorker, which manifested itself chiefly in a lifelong passion for news of all sorts (and a collection of historic newspapers to match). He graduated from Holy Cross High School in Queens and Boston University, where he served as editor-in-chief of the independent campus newspaper, the Daily Free Press (and where he met his future wife). He later studied survey research at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. He joined the staff of the Associated Press in 1985 working in the AP's New England bureau in Maine and New Hampshire. He distinguished himself with coverage of national politics. From there, he joined the AP's general desk in New York as a reporter and editor, before joining the AP's election polling team. He was the founding director of the AP Polling Unit, where he set and enforced standards for coverage of election surveys.

In 2009, he established Mokrzycki Survey Research Services, an independent opinion research consultancy where his clients included NBC News, Pew Research Center, Harvard University School of Public Health, ABC News and the Washington Post. He co-authored several papers on opinion research analysis. He was an active member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, where he was elected to the executive council and worked to preserve the history of survey research. For the past four years he was a consultant to NBC News, where he most recently served as manager of election polling for the November 2014 midterm elections.

Anyone who knew Mike was struck by the full attention he brought to his many passions. A necessarily incomplete list of Mike's interests includes barbecuing (with real wood in a double-chambered smoker, never gas), extreme weather (one of his proudest journalism accomplishments was a 1995 interview with Ted Fujita, creator of the measurement scale for tornadoes), the different varieties of kielbasa, computing as far back as his early adoption of online culture in the late 1980s, and music of all sorts. His long interest in the Grateful Dead included attendance at 59 shows as a fan and taper (he had the ticket stubs to prove it). His move to New England was accompanied by a conversion from the Yankees to the Red Sox, and he gleefully celebrated the world titles of 2004, 2007 and 2013 alongside all of New England. Mike lived for the outdoor pursuits of fishing and skiing. His passion for salt-water fishing, especially in the waters off Plum Island, extended to ownership of the Web domain stripedbass.com, and he was justly proud of the "earned turns" pursuit of walking up ski hills to take his runs.

Mike's greatest adventure, however, was his life with his wife and soulmate and their two sons. As an only child, Mike particularly relished joining the extended Gambon clan as the large family he had never had. He joyfully hosted many family get-togethers where great food and conversation flowed in equal measure. After settling in West Newbury in 2000, Mike

became involved in open space preservation efforts. His idea of a perfect day revolved around anything he could do with his boys, whether that was a powder day at Mad River Glen in Vermont, where he was a shareholder, a night applying the live recording skills he honed at Grateful Dead shows to Connor's musical performances, or jumping on Brady's suggestion to organize a family vacation to Dublin to see Arcade Fire. Mike was especially proud this year of both of his sons joining the Pingree School Ski Team.

In addition to his wife and sons and his oft-photographed Wheaten terrier mix dog Teddy, Mike is survived by his loving family: Andy Gambon and Karen Haggerty (Chelmsford), Mary Gambon (Lowell), Donna Gambon (Chelmsford), and Chris and Susan Gambon of Chelmsford; two nephews, Chris Gambon (Lowell) and Ryan Haggerty (Chelmsford) and his godfather, John Hupalo (Orland Park, IL) as well as many cousins and an international community of friends who will struggle to understand his premature passing, but who will always marvel at and celebrate his intense zest for living.

Visiting Hours will be held Tuesday, December 23, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at BLAKE FUNERAL HOME, 24 Worthen St. Chelmsford, Mass. A funeral Mass will be offered at 9 a.m. Wednesday, December. 24, at St. Mary's Church 25 North Rd. Chelmsford. PLEASE MEET AT CHURCH. Interment will follow in Pine Ridge Cemetery, Chelmsford. His family will host a celebration of his life in the spring. Donations in Mike's memory can be made to the Warren J. Mitofsky Fund at the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research; University of Connecticut, Homer Babbidge Library, 369 Fairfield Way, Unit 1164, Storrs, CT 06269-1164; MercyFirst (the New York child care agency from which Mike was adopted) 525 Convent Road, Syosset, NY 11791 or the charity of your choice.

Click [here](#) for a link to the above obituary.

Click [here](#) for the AP wire story on his death.

### ***Remembering 'Mickey Mojo'***

**Adolphe Bernotas** ([Email](#)) - Mike Mokrzycki (I called him Mickey Mojo) and I became instant friends and colleagues the day he arrived at AP-Concord. To his delight I greeted him with the proper Polish pronunciation of his name, introduced myself as the union rep and he signed a Guild membership card on the spot.

As an AP staffer, Mike was respected as one of the best reporters to come out of the bureau and was known as supersmart, supercompetitive and a good, kind, happy guy who went on to become AP's go-to-expert on political polling.

I appreciated Mike equally as a union stalwart who put his savvy of computerly things to the Guild's benefit. We hated to lose him to management.

Way ahead technologically, he set up The News Media Guild's web site, the first in The Newspaper Guild (I believe when AP was merely thinking about one), the local's cyber communications, its Shoptalk listserv and produced the "Know Your Contract" series. Before wi-fi, Mike was the only person I know who made sure every room in his to-be-built house would be state-of-the-art wired for his computers. He served on the union's Representative Assembly as the Northeast AP delegate and used his polling skills during contract negotiations when we needed statistics/numbers on the Guild's side of the table.

He also was an ardent skier and an accomplished fisherman, saltwater of course. Indeed, one of his email addresses was [mjm@stripedbass.com](mailto:mjm@stripedbass.com), and he was a Deadhead, an expert who wrote AP's appreciation piece when Jerry Garcia died.

I was at Mike and Jill's wedding. He was at mine. Mike was at my retirement party. He would drop by for my birthday parties or my bicycle club's annual lobster clambakes. Mike accompanied me, an immigrant, on a sentimental visit of Ellis Island. We drank lots of wine and beer, talked union, news, politics, Poland, Lithuania, music and fishing. We had talked about Jill and Mike and the boys visiting me and my wife in our Florida retirement winter home. But those damn elections and primaries kept him too busy.

It will be a sad Christmas for those whose paths Mickey Mojo crossed.

## **A note of thanks from Linda Deutsch**



*In this 1970 photo, Linda Deutsch, left, phones in a lead from a makeshift phone bank in a Hall of Justice corridor during a break from the Manson family murder trial in Los Angeles. (Photo: Los Angeles Times, Bruce Cox)*

**Linda Deutsch** ([Email](#)) - on the eve of her retirement set for today - was interviewed Sunday on the "CBS Evening News." It was the first of what will no doubt be a whirlwind of appearances for the famed AP courts reporter, who concludes a 48-year career with The Associated Press.

Click [here](#) for a link to the CBS interview.

Connecting colleague **Paul Colford** reports that today, Linda is scheduled to be on NPR affiliate KPCC Los Angeles' "AirTalk" with Larry Mantle from 1 to 1:30 p.m. And San Francisco NPR affiliate KQED will feature Linda sometime during the week of Dec. 29 on its "Morning Report."

Linda shares this note of thanks to her Connecting colleagues:

I am truly humbled by all the attention and loving messages that have come my way since the announcement of my retirement. It's as if Santa arrived early with so many special gifts for me. The e-mails and Facebook posts from near and far, the TV pieces on CBS and the requests for more and more interviews. I have to say quite honestly that I never expected such an outpouring. The AP did well by me, posting the wire story as one of the 10 things to know on Friday and my colleague John Rogers kept on honing the story to the last minute. Some colleagues have voiced concern about what was left out such as my time covering the Vietnam evacuation on Guam and

my early beginnings as publisher of an Elvis Presley fan club newspaper. Those details were (painfully) excised for space. But fear not, I will cover these in depth in my book. I have received some clips of the AP story appearing in actual newspapers and it was used on tons of blogs and websites including the New York Times. If there's anyone on the planet that doesn't know I'm retiring now, they just weren't paying attention.

All of your comments were precious jewels in my crown. An E-mail from Kathy Gannon, recently so badly injured in Afghanistan, brought tears to my eyes. I was especially touched by the comments from Lou Boccardi and Gary Pruitt. Gary and I had a lovely conversation the other day and I assured him that although I won't be working the beat anymore, I'll always be part of the AP. You are all my family and I plan to keep in touch.

Stay tuned for my next chapter.

With warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year,

Linda

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**Larry Dreiling**, a Kansas newspaperman, shared these thoughts on Facebook about Linda: "Always admired Linda Deutsch's work. That she was a star reporter in a place that demanded absolute objectivity and accuracy is testimony to being disciplined in the AP way of accuracy while beating UPI. Hope she'll break that discipline now and give us a great memoir."

## Connecting mailbox

### *Appreciating colleagues' support in death of his wife*

**Robert Shaw** ([Email](#)) - I'd like to extend my thanks for the many cards, emails and calls I received on the death of my wife Joyce last month. The kind and touching memories of Joyce affirm what I have always thought -- that she was the far better half during our 54 years of marriage. My family and I deeply appreciate the support.

I heard from AP people around the country, including those who knew Joyce from her presence at AP meetings, her occasional visits to the bureau to say "hi" and other contacts in our postings in six states over almost 42



years. She made lots of friends.

I cherish the great memories we shared and I'll hold fast to them during this difficult time and in the future.

I don't know what's in store emotionally for the holidays, but our family opened the holiday season on a bright note a week or so ago with the graduation of our daughter Erin Moore's oldest daughter from the University of Oklahoma. In addition to commencement, we attended a reception at the gorgeous building housing the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Our granddaughter, Caitlin Moore, graduated with distinction with a degree in journalism, with an emphasis on advertising. She also earned a degree in French.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

*(Robert's wife Joyce died at the age of 73 in Little Rock on Nov. 14 - victim of an aggressive, fast-growing strain of lymphoma. The photo above is of Joyce and Robert on their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 2010.)*

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### ***A preview of the 10 top stories of 2014?***

**Doug Tucker** ([Email](#)) - For the last few years, four AP retirees - **Lew Ferguson, Kent Zimmerman, Paul Stevens** and me - have commented regularly among one another by email on the news and sports of the day. We just tackled the Top Stories of 2014 - in advance of the official AP editors' list that we presume will come out any day.

We differed on the top story of the year:

Our biggest news story of 2014 was the rise of ISIS and the shocking savagery which drew America back into combat in Iraq. Or it's Russia's invasion of Crimea and eastern Ukraine which coupled with sanctions and lowering oil prices has led to Vladimir Putin's economic crisis. Or it's the SONY hack attack, "The Pearl Harbor of the computer age." Or it's Ferguson and the riots and racial animus that followed police killings in Missouri and New York of two unarmed black men.

Applying roughly 160 years of combined experience as AP newsmen, we compiled our responses and made our own list of the top 10 news stories of 2014. And we proved what we already knew, that it's hard to get journalists to agree on much. Each of us had a different No. 1 and nowhere on the list was there perfect accord.

My top story, SONY, didn't even make Lew Ferguson's cut and was only ninth in Kent Zimmerman's estimation. Paul Stevens' No. 4 story, Ray Rice and the spotlight on domestic violence, was ignored by everyone else. President Obama's executive order on immigration ranked as high as No. 3 (Lew), and as low as unmentioned (Paul and Kent).

Assigning 10 points for the highest-ranked story, nine points for No. 2, etc., here was our finished product:

1. ISIS
2. Ferguson
3. Russia/Putin.
4. Ebola.
5. Republican midterm victories.
6. SONY.
7. (Tie) immigration, Malaysian airliner mystery.
8. Cuba.
9. Obamacare.
10. (Tie) U.S.-China climate agreement, Hillary's gaffes and campaign clumsiness.

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### ***Is that a tie on the photo network?***

**Joe Edwards** ([Email](#)) - I recall once in the 1970s when a fellow staffer dutifully started the wirephoto transmitter, only to get his tie tangled in the cylinder as it started. The voice from New York soon came down:

"What's going on, Nashville?"

## **What was my first job in journalism? - continued**

**Robert Shaw** ([Email](#)) - In 1958, the Arkansas Gazette in Little Rock hired me and won two Pulitzers. Well, I didn't have anything to do with the newspaper winning, of course. I hardly knew what the Pulitzer was and most likely didn't know then how to pronounce it correctly. It's just that the Gazette took me on as a 16-year-old sports writer about the time of the announcement that it had won Pulitzers for public service and editorials during the 1957 Little Rock Central integration crisis.

The Gazette became my employer - and one of only two employers I would ever have -- when the sports editor who became a legend, Orville Henry,

called my junior-year journalism teacher at North Little Rock High School. Orville asked the formidable Kayte Lou Russell if she had someone who could work for him for a buck an hour from 4 p.m. to midnight, five days a week, weekends included and split-days off. Kayte Lou nominated me, then working on the school's newspaper and yearbook. So, I drove my pink 1951 Henry J (that was an automobile) to the Gazette for an interview and Orville snapped me up.

From my first day, the sports desk editors seized on an opportunity provided by an extra hand in the office and assigned me to file a pile of clips, wire and local photo prints and zincs - the metal "cuts" an engraver etched of photos going into the paper. Being averse to filing things, the sports guys had allowed the pile to become mountainous. I went home for several nights with inky, scratched-up hands and aching back and legs from all the standing and bending trying to put things right.

I spent time, too, sitting across from the chief sports copy editor and studying the edited and headlined copy as he (carefully) slapped it on the copy spike for the copy boys to take to the forest of linotypes clacking away in the back shop. I also got to write one-line heads on shorts/fillers ("Knicks Nick Nats," or vice versa, on an NBA game story stands out in my memory).

After a couple of days, I had my first chance to write copy for the paper. Actually, I retyped, cleaned up and put into Gazette style the weekly state report on fishing and lake conditions. Nevertheless, my mother and dad were proud when I showed them the finished product in the paper the next morning.

In short order, however, I started covering junior high and other sports venues and worked into a job as beat reporter for sports coverage of two of the biggest high schools in town, including mine. One year later, while I was heading out to write the story after covering one of my alma mater's basketball games, I was introduced to my future wife Joyce. I made my deadline, but I did not leave the gym until I had her telephone number.

From those early steps, I progressed to other sports venues over the next three or so years, then went to the news side, first as a reporter and editor on the state desk and then to the city desk as a reporter while I attended and finished college.

I was lucky to be surrounded by talented people who were my mentors. I also was lucky to work at the Gazette at such a heady time for the newspaper, which no longer exists except for a place on the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette masthead. The newsroom abounded in 1957-58 with visiting reporters from throughout the country in town to cover the Little Rock story. So, looking out the door from sports to the newsroom you might see reporters at one time or another from the New York Times, Washington

Post, Time, Newsweek and the networks, etc. Bob Considine sat at a typewriter next to the paper's county courts reporter. Some reporters just passed through to get up to date, others borrowed space and typewriters.

In 1965, the AP hired me for the St. Louis bureau, where I joined a friend, Correspondent Wick Temple, who had been news editor in AP-Little Rock.

You might say my first day/first story in the AP came a week or so before I actually worked for the AP. A week ahead of my report date, I drove to St. Louis to deliver the Shaw family furnishings to a house that Wick had rented for us not far from his own house. Wick and a friend of his helped me unload the rental truck on my first night there.

On the next night, we were enjoying a Cardinals baseball game from the press box of old Busch Stadium, formerly Sportsman's Park. In late innings, Wick asked me if I wanted to write the game story and pushed his typewriter in front of me. His instructions, familiar in those pre-computer days: Finish the story with six outs to go and our Teletype operator, Mike Bugel, would punch it in for New York Sports. New York would update details from the play-by-play Mike continued to transmit and then relay the story to the wires on the final out. As I recall, the routine game stories were maybe 150 to 200 words.

I don't remember if Wick put my byline on the story and I didn't keep a copy. I do, however, have a complete copy of the transmission - play-by-play and game story -- of a game in 1966, the year I transferred from St. Louis to Little Rock to cover politics and the Capitol.

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**William Kaczor** ([Email](#)) - My first job in journalism was unpaid and would never have happened if my freshman high school English teacher had her way. The student newspaper at Lindblom High School on Chicago's South Side was so desperate for help that it started recruiting from freshman honors English classes. Already an avid follower of Keyes Beech, Peter Lisagore and other stalwarts at the Chicago Daily News, I eagerly added my name to the sign-up sheet that was passed around in class. When I arrived at the Lindblom Leader office at the appointed time I was the only one from my class who actually showed up, but the sponsor said she couldn't find my name on the sign-up sheet. I looked at it, and it was there alright but had been scratched out by my teacher, who undoubtedly was convinced that I had no future as a writer because of my struggles with grammar, spelling and sentence diagramming.

Undaunted, the sponsor took me on and assigned me to sports because most of the staff was female and not interested in that subject (this was the 1960s, well before Title IX). That led to my first paid job calling in game

results and notes to The Southwest News-Herald, a neighborhood weekly.

My first "real" job came during the summer between my sophomore and junior years at Eastern Illinois University, where I had just finished a stint as editor of the campus newspaper. It was at the daily in nearby Mattoon, Ill., and quite an initiation to the real world. My first assignment for The Mattoon Journal-Gazette was to interview the parents of the area's first Vietnam War fatality, Philip Henry Rathe. He was a 24-year-old first lieutenant and a recent graduate of the University of Illinois who grew up on a farm nearby. I recall his parents couldn't understand how the Marine could have died from drowning because he had been a good swimmer.

I also learned about the power of the press that summer of 1966. The editor assigned me to do a feature on the local public hospital, telling me to be sure to look at the financial records after my guided tour. I had no idea what I would be looking for, but the hospital manager turned down my request. The editor said to just write the feature, but later that day he told me to stop because the hospital manager had just resigned and that he would write the story. His wife worked at the hospital and he obviously suspected something when he sent his clueless cub reporter there.

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**Karol Stonger** ([Email](#)) - My first paying job was with the AP in Indianapolis, circa 1964. I was hired out of Indiana University as vacation and legislative relief, but my first assignment was the Indy 500 field hospital. Among those who passed through on that race day 50 years ago were drivers Eddie Sachs and Dave MacDonald, a veteran and a rookie who died in a fiery crash. My initiation into the real news world was eye-opening and quick.

And as COB Bill Richardson reminded me, " Well you said you didn't want to work on a women's page." As luck would have it, a few years after I was transferred to New York AP I returned to my professional beginnings--as a national sports writer.

## **Foreign Policy hires AP's Lara Jakes**

David Rothkopf, Editor and CEO of the FP Group announced that Lara Jakes, an award-winning national security reporter and war correspondent, is joining the magazine as deputy managing editor for news, a role in which she will help lead the news team, and manage the day-to-day assignment and editing process.



Lara has covered security and diplomacy for a decade at the Associated Press, and was most recently a senior national security correspondent here in Washington and based at the State Department. She worked in Iraq for three years at AP's bureau in Baghdad, including one as bureau chief. Prior to that, she covered the Pentagon and the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security.

In making the announcement, Rothkopf observed, "Lara is a terrific addition to our growing news team and illustrates our commitment to continue to enhance our ability to provide our readers around the world with unique insights and analysis into the most important stories shaping global affairs."

Jakes will report to Yochi Dreazen, FP's managing editor for news.

Over the last 15 years, Jakes has reported on war and sectarian fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, the West Bank, and Northern Ireland. Her reporting has earned numerous awards, including first place recognition for AP team coverage in 2009. She was a 2005 homeland security fellow at the Knight Center for Specialized Journalism at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism.

Jakes is a 1995 graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism and is pursuing a master's degree in foreign relations at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. She lives in Alexandria, Va., with her husband.

Click [here](#) for a link to the above story.

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Beth Grace ([Email](#))

## Welcome to Connecting



Marty Kaiser ([Email](#)) - Editor, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

David Smyth ([Email](#)) - Latin American desk and World services financial editor in NY, 1963-1996.

Bob Cullen ([Email](#)) - Worked for AP from 1971-81 in Charlotte, Raleigh and Washington.

## Stories of interest

[Time: 29 Instagrams That Defined the World in 2014](#)



As Instagram hit a milestone this month, with its number of monthly active users ballooning to 300 million, TIME, in association with the photo-sharing app, takes a look back at the key moments of 2014.

The selection of images, shared by some of Instagram's most popular and respected photographers, offers an intimate view of some of the defining events of the year: From the toll of war in Gaza to the unrest in Ferguson, Mo., and from the border between Mexico and the U.S. all the way to Mongolia, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone.

"Real moments are captured and posted on Instagram every single day, from Nana Kofi Acquah's image of a Tanzanian doctor timing a baby's labored breathing using his mobile phone, to Brendan Hoffman's haunting first reactions upon arriving at the crash site of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in eastern Ukraine," says Pamela Chen, Instagram's Editorial Director. "These are just a sampling of the powerful images shared by people around the world in 2014."

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[Giving 'Em Fitz: Hail to the unsung sports photographers](#) (Shared by Doug Pizac)

During the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver, photographer Clem Murray and I were both scheduled to cover the men's downhill.

Ultimately, his photo and my story received roughly the same amount of space in the next morning's Inquirer. But the effort required for each was hardly equal.

Murray awoke hours before me. He double-checked all the equipment he had laid out carefully the night before, then crammed a couple of large bags with cameras, digital cards, gigantic lenses, and monopods. He lugged it all to the first of a series of buses that would take him through the Northwest darkness to Whistler's snowy slopes.



Once there, he basically carried his burden up a mountain, unloaded it at a security checkpoint, and repacked. He raced his colleagues for a good vantage point in the snow and cold. He would wait there for hours before the race and his quest for its perfect visual representation began.

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### [When to quit your journalism job](#)

When the sales people are happy to sell what the newsroom is happy to make, there you have a well-run editorial company. So measure your own newsroom's misery by its distance from that (ideal) state.

These notes were inspired by recent events at the New Republic and First Look Media, articles like this one, and some not-for-publication talks I've had lately with young staffers who were troubled by what they saw happening at their place of employment. It also builds on this series of tweets about "product" and on conversations I have with my students all the time.

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### [Kenya Goes After Al Jazeera As Government Expands Powers](#) (Shared by Bill Beecham)

WASHINGTON -- Kenya's government is going after the global news network Al Jazeera for running a documentary that exposes widespread government-sponsored violence.

According to Kenyan government documents obtained by The Huffington

Post, Kenya's ministry of information, communication and technology filed a complaint on Dec. 10 against Al Jazeera's Nairobi bureau chief at the complaints commission of the country's Media Council.

The ministry is alleging that an Al Jazeera documentary on government death squads "was inaccurate, biased and inflammatory." The complaint says that Al Jazeera must respond to the charge within 14 days - or by Dec. 24 - or it will be subject to any orders that the council "may deem fit."

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### [Watch an Annotated Version of Colbert's Farewell Song and See Who All Those People Were](#)

Thursday night's finale of The Colbert Report practically begged for it, so here it is: the definitive video annotation of everyone who appeared during the final sing-along to "We'll Meet Again."

Well, almost everyone.

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### [At One Retirement Home, Residents Run A TV Channel](#)



For many people, being retired means playing golf in Florida or baking in the sunshine in Palm Springs. But at one retirement community in Los Angeles, the most popular activity isn't shuffleboard. It's producing TV shows.

The Wasserman Campus of the Motion Picture and Television Fund is a retirement home for people who worked in the entertainment industry. These actors, producers, editors, and other showbiz veterans have credits dating back to the days of live television.

But the residents are still working hard. Channel 22 is the in-house TV station that airs exclusively in this retirement community. It intersperses Hollywood movies and sitcom reruns with original programs created by, written by and starring the retirees who live there.

## The Final Word

### [NORAD's Santa Tracker Began With A Typo And A Good Sport](#)

This Christmas Eve people all over the world will log on to the official Santa Tracker to follow his progress through U.S. military radar. This all started in 1955, with a misprint in a Colorado Springs newspaper and a call to Col. Harry Shoup's secret hotline at the Continental Air Defense Command, now known as NORAD.

Shoup's children, Terri Van Keuren, 65, Rick Shoup, 59, and Pam Farrell, 70, recently visited StoryCorps to talk about how the tradition began.

Terri remembers her dad had two phones on his desk, including a red one.

"Only a four-star general at the Pentagon and my dad had the number," she says.

"This was the '50s, this was the Cold War, and he would have been the first one to know if there was an attack on the United States," Rick says.



The red phone rang one day in December 1955, and Shoup answered it, Pam says. "And then there was a small voice that just asked, 'Is this Santa Claus?'"

His children remember Shoup as straight-laced and disciplined, and he was annoyed and upset by the call and thought it was a joke - but then, Terri says, the little voice started crying.

"And Dad realized that it wasn't a joke," her sister says. "So he talked to him, ho-ho-ho'd and asked if he had been a good boy and,

'May I talk to your mother?' And the mother got on and said, 'You haven't seen the paper yet?

There's a phone number to call Santa. It's in the Sears ad.' Dad looked it up, and there it was, his red phone number. And they had children calling one after another, so he put a couple of airmen on the phones to act like Santa Claus."

"It got to be a big joke at the command center. You know, 'The old man's really flipped his lid this time. We're answering Santa calls,' " Terri says.

"The airmen had this big glass board with the United States on it and Canada, and when airplanes would come in they would track them," Pam says.

"And Christmas Eve of 1955, when Dad walked in, there was a drawing of a sleigh with eight reindeer coming over the North Pole," Rick says.

"Dad said, 'What is that?' They say, 'Colonel, we're sorry. We were just making a joke. Do you want us to take that down?' Dad looked at it for a while, and next thing you know, Dad had called the radio station and had said, 'This is the commander at the Combat Alert Center, and we have an unidentified flying object. Why, it looks like a sleigh.' Well, the radio stations would call him like every hour and say, 'Where's Santa now?' " Terri says.

"And later in life he got letters from all over the world, people saying, 'Thank you, Colonel,' for having, you know, this sense of humor. And in his 90s, he would carry those letters around with him in a briefcase that had a lock on it like it was top-secret information," she says. "You know, he was an important guy, but this is the thing he's known for."

"Yeah," Rick says, "it's probably the thing he was proudest of, too."

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*Produced for Morning Edition by Jasmyn Belcher Morris.*

## **Today in History**

**By The Associated Press**

Today is Monday, Dec. 22, the 356th day of 2014. There are nine days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**

On Dec. 22, 1944, during the World War II Battle of the Bulge, U.S. Brig. Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe rejected a German demand for surrender, writing "Nuts!" in his official reply.

**On this date:**

In 1775, Esek Hopkins was appointed the commander-in-chief of the Continental Navy.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman said in a message to President Abraham Lincoln: "I beg to present you as a Christmas-gift the city of Savannah."

In 1894, French army officer Alfred Dreyfus was convicted of treason in a court-martial that triggered worldwide charges of anti-Semitism. (Dreyfus was eventually vindicated.)

In 1910, a fire lasting more than 26 hours broke out at the Chicago Union Stock Yards; 21 firefighters were killed in the collapse of a burning building.

In 1937, the first, center tube of the Lincoln Tunnel connecting New York City and New Jersey beneath the Hudson River was opened to traffic. (The second tube opened in 1945, the third in 1957.)

In 1944, former silent film comedian Harry Langdon (once considered a rival to Charles Chaplin) died in Los Angeles at age 60.

In 1968, Julie Nixon married David Eisenhower in a private ceremony in New York.

In 1977, three dozen people were killed when a 250-foot-high grain elevator at the Continental Grain Company plant in Westwego, Louisiana, exploded.

In 1984, New York City resident Bernhard Goetz shot and wounded four youths on a Manhattan subway, claiming they were about to rob him.

In 1989, Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu (chow-SHES'-koo), the last of Eastern Europe's hard-line Communist rulers, was toppled from power in a popular uprising. Playwright Samuel Beckett died in Paris at age 83.

In 1992, a Libyan Boeing 727 jetliner crashed after a midair collision with a MiG fighter, killing all 157 aboard the jetliner, and both crew members of the fighter jet.

In 2001, Richard C. Reid, a passenger on an American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami, tried to ignite explosives in his shoes, but was subdued by

flight attendants and fellow passengers. (Reid is serving a life sentence in federal prison.)

Ten years ago: Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, stung by criticism that he'd been insensitive to the needs of troops and their families, offered an impassioned defense, saying when he would meet wounded soldiers or relatives of those killed in battle, "their grief is something I feel to my core." Vancouver Canucks forward Todd Bertuzzi received a conditional discharge after pleading guilty to assault, more than nine months after slugging Colorado forward Steve Moore from behind during a game.

Five years ago: Assailants gunned down the mother, aunt and siblings of a Mexican marine who was killed in a raid that took out one of Mexico's most powerful cartel leaders. Nebraska's Ndamukong Suh (ehn-DAHM'-uh-kehn soo) became the first defensive player voted The Associated Press College Football Player of the Year.

One year ago: Mikhail Khodorkovsky (mih-hah-EEL' khoh-dohr-KAHV'-skee), the Russian oligarch who'd crossed President Vladimir Putin and ended up in jail for 10 years, told a press conference in Berlin that he planned to devote his life to securing the release of the country's political prisoners. President Barack Obama and the vacationing first family temporarily skipped the beach in Hawaii to attend the Oregon State-Akron game at the Diamond Head Classic tournament in Honolulu. (Oregon State, coached by first lady Michelle Obama's brother, Craig Robinson, lost to Akron, 83-71.)

Today's Birthdays: Former House Speaker Jim Wright is 92. Actor Hector Elizondo is 78. Country singer Red Steagall is 76. Former World Bank Group President Paul Wolfowitz is 71. Baseball Hall-of-Famer Steve Carlton is 70. Former ABC News anchor Diane Sawyer is 69. Rock singer-musician Rick Nielsen (Cheap Trick) is 66. Rock singer-musician Michael Bacon is 66. Baseball All-Star Steve Garvey is 66. Golfer Jan Stephenson is 63. Actress BernNadette Stanis is 61. Rapper Luther "Luke" Campbell is 54. Country singer-musician Chuck Mead is 54. Actor Ralph Fiennes is 52. Actress Lauralee Bell is 46. Country singer Lori McKenna is 46. Actress Dina Meyer is 46. Actress Heather Donahue is 41. Actor Chris Carmack is 34. Actor Logan Huffman is 25. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jordin Sparks is 25. Pop singer Meghan Trainor is 21.

***Thought for Today: "My mistakes are my life." - Samuel Beckett (1906-1989).***

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