

From: Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2015 9:09 AM
To: stevenspl@live.com
Subject: Connecting - February 12, 2015

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



Connecting

February 12, 2015

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



Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning!

We mourn the loss of CBS News' **Bob Simon**, who died in a car crash in New York City on Wednesday night.



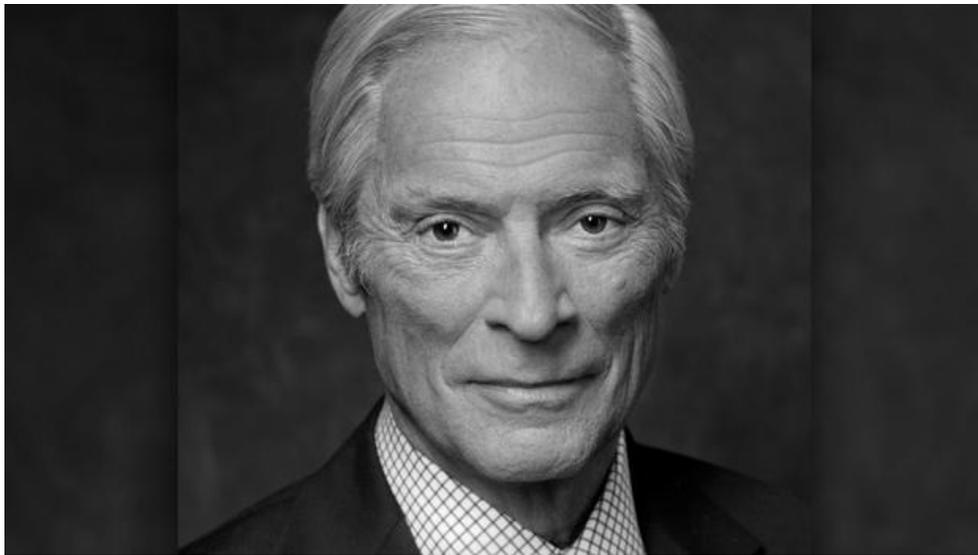
Several of our Connecting colleagues knew and worked with Simon, who once reported from Vietnam and was among the last journalists in Saigon when it fell. Noted **Michael Putzel**, "Awful news about Bob Simon. Shocking he could survive all he did in war zones, etc., and then get killed in a car accident."

Former AP Saigon chief of bureau **Richard Pyle** said, "Among TV journalists of our time, from Vietnam to the Gulf war and beyond, Bob Simon of CBS was one of the best, a straight-ahead reporter and never full of himself as some tend to be. His sudden death in an auto crash comes two years and one month after Richard Threlkeld, another widely respected CBS veteran of Vietnam coverage, was killed, Jan 12, 2013, when his car was hit by a propane truck in Amagansett, on Long Island."

Other stories of interest in today's edition include Connecting members' comment on NBC's six-month suspension of **Brian Williams**.

Paul

CBS News' Bob Simon dies in car accident



NEW YORK - Bob Simon, the longtime "60 Minutes" correspondent and legendary CBS News foreign reporter died suddenly Wednesday night in a car accident in New York City. The award-winning newsman was 73.

"Bob Simon was a giant of broadcast journalism, and a dear friend to everyone in the CBS News family. We are all shocked by this tragic, sudden loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bob's extended family and especially with our colleague Tanya Simon," said CBS News President David Rhodes.

"It's a terrible loss for all of us at CBS News," 60 Minutes Executive Producer Jeff Fager said in a statement. "It is such a tragedy made worse because we lost him in a car accident, a man who has escaped more difficult situations than almost any journalist in modern

times.

Click [here](#) to read more. (Shared by Pat Milton)

AP Reporter Grills State Dept. Spokesperson After Obama 'Random' Kosher Deli Remarks



Coming off the heels of President Obama's comments that the kosher deli in Paris was attacked at "random," State Department spokesperson Jen Psaki refused to call the attack an "anti-Jewish" attack when pressed by reporters on Tuesday.

During a lively back-and-forth between Psaki and the AP's **Matt Lee** (at left), Psaki said that she wasn't sure if the kosher deli itself or the

people inside were the target. Psaki's comments echoed those of White House press secretary Josh Earnest earlier on Tuesday.

"Yesterday, the president at his news conference raised some eyebrows by saying that the victims of the shooting in Paris at the kosher deli were 'random.' Your colleague at the White House has apparently said something similar today," Lee told Psaki. "Is that really - does the administration really believe that the victims of this attack were not singled out because they were of a particular faith?"



"Well, as you know, I believe if I remember the victims specifically, there were not all victims of one background or one nationality, so I think what I mean by that is I don't know if they spoke to the targeting of the grocery store or that specifically about the individuals impacted," Psaki said.

Unfortunately for Psaki, her talking points were off the mark. All four victims at the kosher deli were indeed Jewish. In addition, gunman Amedy Coulibaly called a news outlet from inside the deli, telling them he "targeted them because they were Jewish."

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

Connecting colleagues comment on Brian Williams

Mark Mittelstadt ([E-mail](#)) - I'm puzzled why NBC didn't just pull the trigger on Brian Williams yesterday. Will Williams have any more credibility in the middle of August than he does today? I have my doubts. He's seriously damaged goods.

Termination would have been more difficult, but it also would have been cleaner and given NBC News a clear path forward, allowing it to begin rehabilitating its image and giving a new anchor a chance to get his or her footing. NBC also would have gained credibility by showing it truly believed Williams' actions were "wrong and completely inappropriate." As it is, Williams will be an albatross hanging around the news division's neck for the next six months. Although I'm also not sure he sticks around that long.

-0-

Tom Gillem ([Email](#))-

If misrepresentation of the facts is sufficient for removing TV anchors from their jobs - as it should be - then perhaps the same measuring stick also should be used for all cable TV newscasters, particularly those at Fox News

.

-0-

George Krinsky ([Email](#)) - I don't expect this to be the last word on Brian Williams, but it is mine:

Having been in retirement and off the firing line for three years now, I am transitioning from a sometime hard-nosed journalist to an ordinary news consumer with what I hope is a reader's compassion. I refer to a respected man's very public humiliation for something that doesn't come close to a crime or even a sin committed in the act of journalism.

One could say this is the price one pays for fame and fortune, but I have to wonder how many other news stars have escaped a PR bullet they well deserved. Perhaps more important to ponder is the lengths a news corporation is willing to go to protect its "brand." A brief announcement about the suspension, pending an investigation, would have sufficed.

May we move on?

-0-

Bob Daugherty ([Email](#)) - Most of the accounts of Williams' wartime adventures have come from military sources. I'm curious as to what his accompanying NBC crew had to say about their adventures on the same chopper with Brian. There had to be at least a cameraman and a producer, probably a couple more. What did they say and when did they say it...and

to whom?

Connecting mailbox

Special memories of Jerry Tarkanian

Robert Macy ([Email](#)) - Wednesday's death of basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian brought back memories of covering one of the game's great mentors - and the story about him that I loathed writing.

As AP's Las Vegas Correspondent from 1981 until my retirement in 2000, covering Tarkanian's Runnin' Rebels was a duty I shared with AP sports writer Tim Dahlberg. Having covered Wilt Chamberlain's junior year at Kansas University and Phog Allen's restless retirement years, I had a real love for the game.



In 1983 I had an interview with Tark. My son, Brent, 12, convinced me to let him tag along. Jerry took a liking to Brent, who was overwhelmed. Days later Brent and I were watching TV when he fell over in my arms, suffering what turned out to be a grand mall seizure. He was rushed to a hospital where a neurosurgeon determined he had a tumor deep in his brain. As the days passed, doctors weighed whether to risk neurosurgery that could save, or end Brent's life. The final judgment was that the tumor was too deep, and appeared to be benign. My wife, Melinda, and I agreed with their decision. Jerry was shaken by the news of his new young friend and stayed in touch with us on Brent's condition. When Brent was released from the hospital a week later, one of the first calls was Jerry wanting Brent to stop by a Rebel practice. When we did, Tarkanian halted practice and introduced the players to Brent, then gave him a basketball autographed by the team.

Today Brent is a healthy 44-year-old with a beautiful wife, Martha, who has learned to live with his Rebel fanaticism. (They are shown below with their dog Scout.)



In the years that followed, the Macys grew to know the Tarkanian family well. Jerry coached three Final Four teams while I with AP-Las Vegas, including a 103-73 championship rout of Duke in 1990 that remains an NCAA record.

Jerry and the NCAA had an extreme mutual dislike for each other, as witnessed by the number of times Tarkanian teams were on the agency's hot seat, and Tark's bitter tirades against the governing agency. The issue reached a head in May 1991 when the Las Vegas Review-Journal published a photo of four Rebel players in a hot tub with Richard "The Fixer" Perry. It would be the beginning of the end of Tark's UNLV tenure. School officials and some community leaders met with Tarkanian, weighing the various options. The closed door meeting ran into the evening hours, without any sign of resolution. Early the next morning I called two of the meeting participants. Both gave the same story -- Jerry would stay at UNLV one more year to coach a crop of promising players he had recruited, then he would retire from UNLV. I wrote the story quoting the two unnamed sources with the "one more and gone" decision. Jerry vehemently denied the story, and other national media tried to shoot our AP story down. Nervous editors in New York kept asking me if I was sure of my sources. I assured them I was. I would see Jerry at various events and if looks could kill.... - sort of a cross between 'How could you?' and 'What did you do to me?'

After several long days, Jerry and UNLV officials gathered with the media to announce the results of that long meeting of school officials and local power brokers. It was verbatim what we said in our AP story. NY Gen and NY Sports breathed a sigh of relief. Some media even gave The AP credit for having a five-day beat on the hot national sports story. I wasn't doing any high fives. I was out front with a story that marked the beginning of the end of the career of one of basketball's great coaches - and a friend.

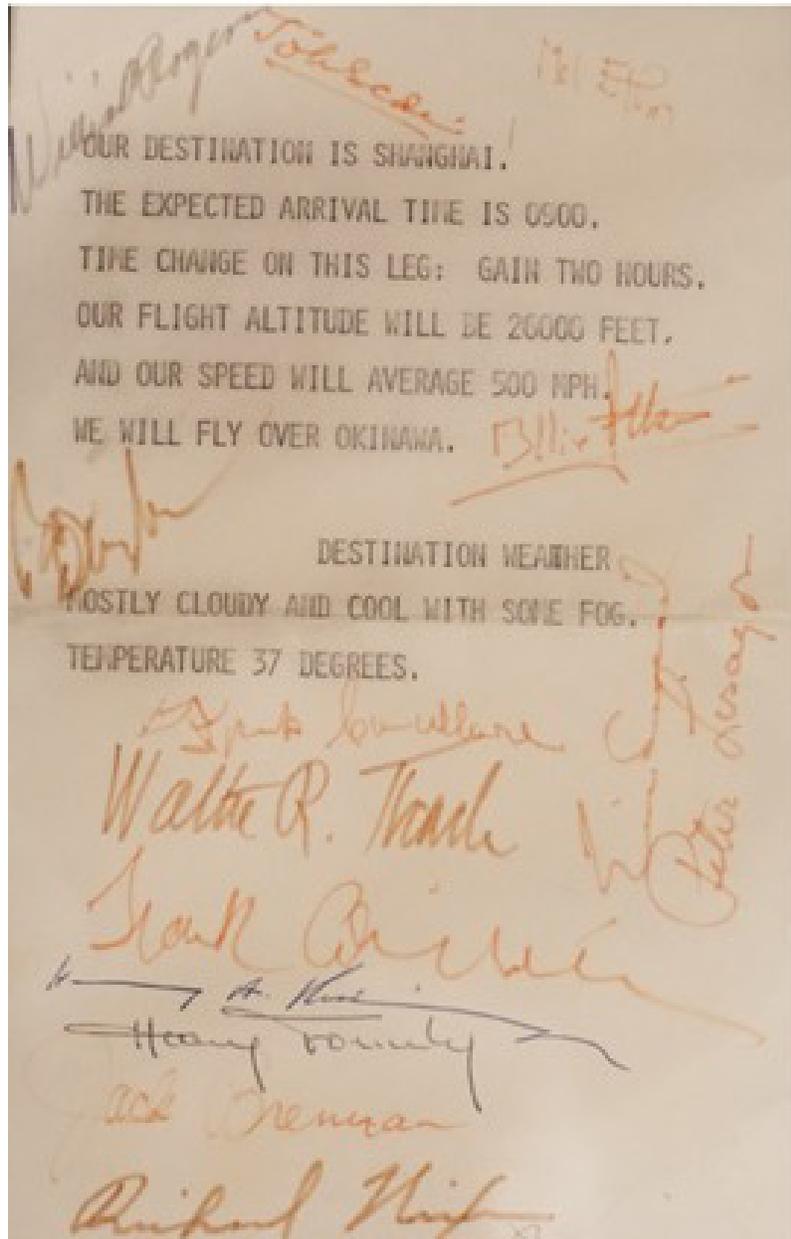
I found myself remembering Phog Allen - another great coach who would spend his waning years feeling (rightfully so) that he was mistreated by the powers that be.

-0-

More on those memorable items

Bob Daugherty ([Email](#)) - Over the years I collected a ton of credentials and a lot of forgettable items, some were discarded long ago.





One that I've always appreciated was the one shown here. It's a 'table tent' from Air force One that when opened up had the weather report for Shanghai. It was on the table in the press compartment of AF 1 the morning we left Guam on our way to China to begin Nixon's historic visit. I am not an autograph hound, but I snatched the card and held it until we were on our way back to Washington. I then sent it forward and collected several signatures of the principals, including a few press, on the plane. They included President and Pat Nixon, Henry Kissinger, Eric Sevareid, Secretary of State William P. Rogers, Frank Cormier (AP), Ollie Atkins (official photographer) and myself. It is double framed with both sides visible.

-0-

Welcome to Connecting - Dana Neuts

Dana E. Neuts ([Email](#)) - Based in the Seattle area, Dana Neuts is a freelance writer, editor, marketing professional, author, speaker and consultant. She specializes in storytelling, whether it is writing for a publications like The Seattle Times, 425 Business magazine or AARP Bulletin or telling clients' stories to share their message with their target markets.



In addition, Neuts is the publisher of iLoveKent.net, a hyperlocal blog about Kent, Washington, and she is currently serving as the national president for the Society of Professional Journalists, the nation's largest broad-based journalism organization. To learn more about Neuts or to see samples of her work, visit [VirtuallyYourz.com](#) or [DanaNeuts.net](#).

Stories of interest - Brian Williams

[Kings of Their Crafts, but on Divergent Paths](#)



Other than timing, Jon Stewart's triumphant retirement and Brian Williams's public and humbling disenfranchisement would seem to have little in common.

But begin with the fact that both men went to high school in New Jersey and both began their adult lives without much going for them, other than a sense that the island with all of the tall buildings in the distance suggested there was more to life than volunteering as a firefighter (Mr. Williams) or tending bar (Mr. Stewart).

Both men made up for lost time once they got into their careers. Mr. Williams churned through assignments and assumed an anchor chair on MSNBC and at NBC on the weekends while he was in his 30s, and slid into the big chair in 2004 by the time he was 45. Mr. Stewart ground it out in stand-up, working almost nightly at the Comedy Cellar, then landed some TV gigs here and there. After blowing up large on the "Late Night With David Letterman" in 1993, he was thought to be a favorite to replace him, but that job went to Conan O'Brien. It was only when he got his hands on the wheel of "The Daily Show" that he found his sweet spot and opened up a singular vein in American comedy.

-0-

Frantic Efforts at NBC to Curb Rising Damage Caused by Brian Williams

Hours before Brian Williams took the anchor's chair for the nightly newscast on Feb. 4, a sense of dread began to spread through the Rockefeller Plaza offices of NBC News.

The military newspaper Stars and Stripes had just published an article in which Mr. Williams acknowledged that he had exaggerated an account of a helicopter journey in Iraq. Worse, Mr. Williams had written a weak apology, reading it first to the newspaper, then posting it on Facebook. None of his superiors knew about it.

Alarmed, the news operation immediately began scrambling to contain the damage, according to people with knowledge of the events of the last week. A team was quickly assembled to draft a statement that Mr. Williams could read during his "NBC Nightly News" show that evening to address the issue. But the Facebook post boxed them in. The explanations had to match.

Mr. Williams went on the air hours later and delivered the statement, including an apology.

-0-

Stars & Stripes reporter: 'No satisfaction' from seeing Brian Williams suspended

Travis J. Tritten, the Stars & Stripes reporter who broke the story that Brian Williams had exaggerated his experiences in Iraq, said Tuesday that he took no satisfaction in seeing the NBC anchor suspended for six months without pay.

"I get no satisfaction from seeing Williams suspended. Like the vets I spoke with, I just wanted to correct the record on what happened that day," Tritten told the On Media blog in an email. "I am glad we were able to do that. And obviously NBC made the choice they felt was best for their news operation."

Williams was suspended without pay for six months, NBC News announced on Tuesday, for misrepresenting a story about his time covering the Iraq War in 2003.

Last week, Tritten was sent a screengrab of a comment thread on the "NBC Nightly News"

Facebook page showing soldiers disputing Williams' claims that his Chinook helicopter was shot down by an RPG in 2003. Tritten tracked down the soldiers and confronted Williams with the allegations, spawning the controversy that resulted in Williams' suspension.

-0-

[Brian Williams and Katrina: He never let the story -- New Orleans' story - go](#) (Shared by Kent Prince)

The media critic's handbook calls for a totally tough pose on Brian Williams right now. He fibbed, he fabbed, he paused on the beach on D-Day to snap a selfie with Patton.

I'm also expected to concoct and hammer a derisive nickname (Gunga Dan, "Body by" Brian, etc.) to prove my cred on the mean tweets of the elementary-school playground that now dominate the court of public opinion.

The newsarazzi, by which I mean pretty much everybody on Earth with wi-fi access, have locked down on a target. He's toast, and I should be enjoying the meal.

In Williams' case, I just don't have the appetite.

Other stories of interest

[The irresponsible reporting in the Chapel Hill killings](#)

As soon as the news broke Tuesday evening, anyone near a TV, radio or computer heard that three Muslim students were murdered near the University of North Carolina.

My immediate thought was, "Oh, my God, not Muslims."

That very same day, we had gotten confirmation that 26-year-old American hostage Kayla Mueller, who had been abducted by the Islamic State, was, indeed, dead. The last thing we need to do is create an impression for the Islamic State or any other terrorist group that we are as bad as they are.

My second thought was: "Wait a minute. Why are they telling me the North Carolina victims were Muslim? Why is this information in headlines too numerous to count?" It is highly unlikely that any mention would have been made of the victims' religion had they been Christian, Jewish, Hindu or some other, unless they were in the midst of a religious ceremony at the time of the attack.



-0-

['Allison, can you explain what Internet is?'](#)

In 1994, "Today Show" anchors Bryant Gumbel and Katie Couric had a discussion about this new thing called the Internet that became the stuff of legend. Then Couric asked a legendary question: "Allison, can you explain what Internet is?" That moment is the foundation of a fun ad by BMW that debuted during the Super Bowl and has been in heavy rotation ever since. But have you wondered who "Allison" is?



Let me lift the veil of mystery. She is Allison Davis. At the time, she was the set writer/producer for the NBC News morning program. The powerful post meant she knew everything about everything the anchors were saying and doing on the show. She was also a founder of the National Association of Black Journalists. I first met Davis during my first internship on the "Today Show" the summer of 1986. She was tough, a journalist who at once scared and awed teenage me as I watched her and others in action on the third floor of 30 Rockefeller Plaza.

-0-

[A 40-year-old Philly bartender sets out to make a difference as a newspaper journalist](#)



Bob Stewart is a 40-year-old bartender and former heating/air conditioning service technician who has a new career goal: He wants to be a fulltime newspaper reporter.

Huh?

"One thing's for sure, I didn't do this for the money," says Stewart, who is a spring-semester reporting intern at the Philadelphia Daily News. (He got his first News byline on Friday.)

"In the ten years since I left the Steamfitters [union] I would've made at least \$700,000 without hustling much. Journalism is my dream. I love telling stories. I love making people laugh, cry, or just say, 'hmm.' I want to keep government accountable and power in check."

-0-

[Rupert Murdoch's grip on News Corp slipping](#)

(Shared by Claude Erbsen)

On Wednesday evening, an innocuous press release



issued in Saudi Arabia again cast doubt on whether Rupert Murdoch's grip on the News Corp print media empire was secure.

At last year's shareholder meeting, a massive 47.4 per cent of votes cast supported a proposal to eliminate the company's dual-class share structure that, had it passed, would have diluted his voting interest from almost 40 per cent to a mere 14 per cent.

The vote raised a big question about the actions of Murdoch's long-time ally who made his position at News Corp impregnable, Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal.

Why didn't Alwaleed vote his 6.6 voting stake against the resolution and ensure a much safer margin of victory?

The answer emerged on Wednesday. Alwaleed sold most of his News Corp shares in the first half of last year.

It meant that, going into the annual meeting last November, only Murdoch and News Corp insiders would have known just how vulnerable the media group was to a shareholder revolt.

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Feb. 12, the 43rd day of 2015. There are 322 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, was born in present-day Larue County, Kentucky.

On this date:

In 1554, Lady Jane Grey, who'd claimed the throne of England for nine days, and her husband, Guildford Dudley, were beheaded after being condemned for high treason.

In 1818, Chile officially proclaimed its independence, more than seven years after initially renouncing Spanish rule.

In 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded.

In 1914, groundbreaking took place for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

In 1915, the cornerstone was laid for the Lincoln Memorial.

In 1924, George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" premiered in New York.

In 1940, the radio play "The Adventures of Superman" debuted with Bud Collyer as the Man of Steel.

In 1959, the redesigned Lincoln penny - with an image of the Lincoln Memorial replacing two ears of wheat on the reverse side - went into circulation.

In 1963, a Northwest Orient Airlines Boeing 720 broke up during severe turbulence and crashed into the Florida Everglades, killing all 43 people aboard.

In 1973, Operation Homecoming began as the first release of American prisoners of war from the Vietnam conflict took place.

In 1995, Iron Butterfly bass player Philip "Taylor" Kramer disappeared; four years later, his skeletal remains were found inside his wrecked minivan in a ravine near Malibu, California.

In 1999, the Senate voted to acquit President Bill Clinton of perjury and obstruction of justice.

Ten years ago: Former presidential candidate Howard Dean was elected national Democratic chairman during the party's winter meeting. "The Gates," a 16-day art exhibit created by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, debuted in New York's Central Park with the unfurling of saffron-colored fabric banners suspended from 16-foot-high frames.

Five years ago: On the day the Winter Olympics opened in Vancouver, British Columbia, Nodar Kumaritashvili (noh-DAHR' KOO'-mah-ree-tahsh-VEE'-lee), a 21-year-old luger from the republic of Georgia, was killed in a high-speed crash during a practice run. Three University of Alabama-Huntsville professors were gunned down during a faculty meeting;

police charged neurobiologist Amy Bishop with capital murder. (Bishop later pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.)

One year ago: Legislation to raise the U.S. federal debt limit and prevent a crippling government default cleared Congress. Tina Maze of Slovenia and Dominique Gisin of Switzerland tied for gold in the Olympic women's downhill at Sochi; it was the first gold-medal tie in Olympic alpine skiing history. Actor-comedian Sid Caesar, 91, died in Beverly Hills, California.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Franco Zeffirelli is 92. Actor Louis Zorich is 91. Baseball Hall-of-Fame sportscaster Joe Garagiola is 89. Movie director Costa-Gavras is 82. Basketball Hall-of-Famer Bill Russell is 81. Actor Joe Don Baker is 79. Author Judy Blume is 77. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak is 73. Country singer Moe Bandy is 71. Actress Maud Adams is 70. Actor Cliff DeYoung is 69. Actor Michael Ironside is 65. Rock musician Steve Hackett is 65. Rock singer Michael McDonald is 63. Actress Joanna Kerns is 62. Actor-talk show host Arsenio Hall is 59. Actor John Michael Higgins is 52. Actor Raphael Sbarge is 51. Actress Christine Elise is 50. Actor Josh Brolin is 47. Singer Chynna Phillips is 47. Rock musician Jim Creeggan (Barenaked Ladies) is 45. Rhythm-and-blues musician Keri Lewis is 44. Actor Jesse Spencer is 36. Actress Sarah Lancaster is 35. Actress Christina Ricci is 35. NFL quarterback Robert Griffin III is 25. Actress Jennifer Stone is 22. Actresses Rylie and Baylie Cregut (TV: "Raising Hope") are five.

Thought for Today: "Determine that the thing can and shall be done, and then we shall find the way." - Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865).

[Forward this email](#)

 SafeUnsubscribe

This email was sent to stevenspl@live.com by stevenspl@live.com | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Rapid removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).



Connecting newsletter | 14719 W 79th Ter | Lenexa | KS | 66215