

## Connecting - April 13, 2015

1 message

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# Connecting

April 13, 2015

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## I can dance!



Colleagues,

Good Monday morning!

I can think of no better way to open this week's Connecting than this share from our colleague **Claudia DiMartino** ([Email](#)) - who has been doing well in the first weeks following her lung transplant March 6. She's been in the thoughts and prayers of many of us.

Having fun then and now in the photo above, Claudia notes, "I can dance! The college-age Claudia felt great cutting loose on the dance floor and so does the post lung transplant Claudia some 40 years later. For an exercise in Photoshop I decided to put the past together with the present. I believe I'm even more joyous now than I was back then throwing care to the wind moving and grooving to the music."

Deadly tornadoes were the top story in Saturday's Connecting presented to you by **Mark Mittelstadt**, and the twisters elicited memories from **Gene Herrick** and **George Zucker** that lead off today's Connecting mailbox.

Meantime, Ye Olde Connecting Editor was in central Kansas over the weekend, setting fire to the prairies. Legally, that is.



I have lived in Kansas for more than 30 years, got to witness and take part in a prairie burn. I ventured into the middle of the Flint Hills, which are 82,000 square miles of unplowed tallgrass prairie that stretch from eastern Kansas to north-central Oklahoma. The region is an important area for grazing cattle.

In a typical year, following a practice once done by Native Americans, ranchers annually burn thousands of acres of grassland to reduce the abundance of undesirable trees and shrubs while

promoting nutritionally rich grass for that summer's grazing. We were among a couple hundred people who took part in the annual Flames in the Flint Hills event at the Flying W Ranch. Here's a photo.

And on the way home, we stopped for lunch in historic Council Grove, Kansas, along the Santa Fe Trail, where the Council Grove Republican is perhaps the smallest daily in the country taking AP service - certainly the smallest in Kansas, at 1,700 daily circulation. Publisher/owner **Craig McNeal** wasn't there, it was Sunday after all, but an honor rack outside the newspaper allowed me to plunk down 20 cents for the latest edition. And my friend **Bruce Smith** snapped this photo.



Notice the sign in the front window of the Republican on No Walmart. Similar signs were in the storefront windows of many other businesses on a thriving Main Street of the 157-year-old community. It harkens back to the beginnings of Walmart and how many of my publisher and editor friends predicted it would be the death of their downtowns. Not in Council Grove, anyway!

With that, here are stories of interest.

Paul

## Connecting mailbox

### *Tornadoes Are Weird*

**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) - As an Associated Press photographer, I have covered many tornadoes, none of them pleasant, and all of them weird.

I remember three of them that stand out in my memory. In 1948, a massive tornado hit Coatesville, IN. On arrival at the scene, I noticed some 50 chickens running around. They were all naked. The storm had just pulled all of their feathers off. At the same storm, I found two men, nicely arguing. "That's my house," said one man. "Yes, but your house is on my foundation," said the other. The storm had blown away the one man's house, then picked up his next door neighbor's house and placed it almost exactly on the other's foundation.

In Memphis, TN, I periodically worked the news and radio desk. One day, probably in the spring of 1949, I was on my way to work. It was a very hot and muggy day, and the air was rather still. I "felt" the weather wasn't "Right." In other words, I felt a "Tornado itch." Upon arriving at the office at 7 A.M., I called the weather bureau and asked if they had issued any tornado alerts. "Hell no, Gene, it's all clear." Moments later I received a call from a city in Eastern Arkansas reporting a big tornado had just hit them. I called the weather bureau back and asked if they had a tornado alert for us. The response was, "No, it's a beautiful day." I then told the man that he had better call that town in Arkansas and tell them because they had just been hit. Moments later, I received a tornado alert from that same man at the weather bureau. He had no comment.

The third was in Fargo, ND, in the early 60's. I went up from Minneapolis to cover the story, and soon met a man whose house was almost the only one left standing in the storm's path. Answering my question as to why his house survived, he said he had had a constant battle with his wife about leaving the windows open during the storm. His wife kept closing them, and complaining about rain damage to her curtains and floors. He repeatedly reopened the windows. He told me that in his opinion that was the reason his house survived because the inside air pressure was equalized with the outside.

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## ***The Palm Sunday Tornadoes***

**George Zucker** ([Email](#)) - Jim Polk had just replaced me on the AP desk in Indianapolis. It was late afternoon on April 11, 1965. "Happy Palm Sunday," Polk said. "Not much going on," I replied. "But keep an eye on the weather wire. Tornadoes hit Iowa and Illinois and they may be headed our way." That evening, Judi and I were relaxing in our apartment after a big spaghetti dinner when Jim Polk called. "Get back here right away!" he yelled. "Tornadoes are ripping the state apart! Whole towns have blown away!"

We didn't know it then, but 47 tornadoes had left 271 people dead and 1,500 hurt in six Midwestern states, including Indiana, with property damage exceeding \$235 million. More than 50 towns were hit. Polk was poring over a map of Indiana when I got back to the bureau in downtown Indianapolis. "You better get out to Marion," he said, pointing to the small town some 70 miles away. "A twister wrecked a trailer park and a shopping center there. The whole town's blacked out."

Still sleepy from the pasta, I climbed into my Volkswagen and headed for Marion in a heavy rainstorm. I had never been there. Of the six states, Indiana was the hardest hit that Palm Sunday. Three strings of tornadoes had torn through the northern tier of the Hoosier state, killing 139 people and injuring 1,200 - the worst disaster in Indiana history.

I blinked back sleep as the hard wind and rain slashed at my small car. Around 9 o'clock, nearly three hours after I had left Indianapolis, a welcomed sign caught my headlights: "Marion City Limits." It was like driving into a black hole. Not a single light bulb was burning. Then a spooky thing happened. I heard some men talking on the sidewalk. One voice was familiar. Incredibly, in the pitch dark I had stopped in front of the Marion Chronicle Tribune. The familiar voice was the editor - a man I had met at a newspaper convention just the month before.

"The only place in town with lights is the hospital," the editor told me. "They have emergency generators for power. That's where all the action is. Everyone is going there." I found the hospital by heading toward the light, careful to avoid the throngs of the injured headed the same way. At the hospital, people in tattered clothes limped about corridors crowded with stretchers. The cafeteria had been turned into a children's ward. An eerie silence hung over the confusion. There were no shouts or rushing about.

I found an attractive young couple huddled in a corner, holding each other in their arms, an ecstatic wildness in their eyes. When I introduced myself as a reporter, they told me they had just been married and had only recently returned from their honeymoon. They talked excitedly about the miracle that saved them as they washed their Sunday dinner dishes. "There was this sound like a big freight train and then everything was flying around," the wife said. "The next thing we knew, we were on our backs in the living room on the first floor." Others died as the apartment building collapsed around them. They escaped unhurt. The spared honeymooners were among the few survivors in their demolished building. They held onto each other in the hospital corridor, shaking and happy to be alive. The husband noted their recent marriage vows about being together until death. "I guess it wasn't that time," he said.

Before that night was over, there would be many stories about the capricious nature of tornadoes. Unlike hurricanes, which plow through everything in their path, tornadoes hop, skip and jump in a helter-skelter way, leaving one home undamaged, while destroying houses on either side. There were pockets of spared homes in neighborhoods that were wiped out.

Jim Polk, who went on to become a Pulitzer Prize winner for The Washington Evening Star and later an investigative reporter for NBC-TV, wrote all the main leads that terrible Palm Sunday night. He complimented my Marion sidebar, which I had phoned in from the radio station, but chided me on the "freight-train" quote.

"People who see tornadoes always say they sound like a freight train," he said.

**Connecting new-member profile - John Harris**



**John Harris** ([Email](#)) - provides this self-profile: A life-long Tar Heel, born and bred. Graduated from UNC in 1975. Worked for the Village Companies in Chapel Hill and Wilmington, NC, from 1976 - July 1980 (Village owned radio stations, a cable system and several printing operations). Began working for AP in August 1980 as Broadcast Executive for North and South Carolina. Somehow, and somewhat remarkably, remains employed by the AP today as Regional Radio Executive for Large Markets in the Southeast.....covering 10 states and the Washington, DC market. Harris is based out of the Charlotte Bureau. The first bureau chiefs he worked with were Dave Tomlin in South Carolina and Ambrose Dudley in North Carolina.

## Stories of interest

### [Reuters Iraq bureau chief threatened, denounced over story](#) (Reuters)

LONDON (Reuters) - The Baghdad bureau chief for Reuters has left Iraq after he was threatened on Facebook and denounced by a Shi'ite paramilitary group's satellite news channel in reaction to a Reuters report last week that detailed lynching and looting in the city of Tikrit.



The threats against journalist Ned Parker began on an Iraqi Facebook page run by a group that calls itself "the Hammer" and is believed by an Iraqi security source to be linked to armed Shi'ite groups. The April 5 post and subsequent comments demanded he be expelled from Iraq. One commenter said that killing Parker was "the best way to silence him, not kick him out."

Three days later, a news show on Al-Ahd, a television station owned by Iranian-backed armed group Asaib Ahl al-Haq, broadcast a segment on Parker that included a photo of him. The segment accused the reporter and Reuters of denigrating Iraq and its government-backed forces, and called on viewers to demand Parker be expelled.

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### [John Dickerson to replace Bob Schieffer on 'Face the Nation'](#) (Politico)

CBS News political director John Dickerson has been named the next host of "Face the Nation," host Bob Schieffer announced Sunday.



Dickerson's first turn in the anchor chair will take place this summer, when Schieffer retires after nearly five decades in journalism, more than two of them as host of the Sunday news show.

"I couldn't be happier," Schieffer said on Sunday's broadcast. "'Face the Nation' is going to be in good hands."

Dickerson's connection to the show and network is deep: His mother, Nancy Dickerson, was the first female correspondent in the CBS News Washington bureau and an associate producer on "Face the Nation."

"I'm honored and really excited. Mom would've been excited too. She was an associate producer on this show on the very first airing on this broadcast," Dickerson said.

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**From A to Z (Asteroids to Zombies), the British Just Want the Facts** (New York Times) (Shared by Sibby Christensen)

LONDON - The requests come in to local councils with appalling regularity: "How many residents in Sutton own an ostrich?" "What procedures are in place for a zombie invasion of Cumbria?" "How many people have been banned from Birmingham Library because they smell?"



In Wigan, the council was asked what plans were in place to protect the town from a dragon attack, while Worthing Borough Council had to outline its preparations for an asteroid crash.

Government secrecy has long been a hallmark of Britain, where neither laws nor traditions made it easy to obtain the documents and records that are the underpinnings of any bureaucracy. But a decade ago, the doors were swung wide open to allow the sunshine of public scrutiny into agencies, bureaus and councils, and the result has been both gratifying and slightly alarming.

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**Just 'Between You & Me,' Here Are Some Handy Grammar Tips** (NPR)

In radio, we don't punctuate - at least, not on the air. Nevertheless, we're honored to meet a woman who is at the pinnacle of punctuation.

Mary Norris is a copy editor at The New Yorker, a magazine justly famous for the care it

takes with words. The work of very well-known authors has felt the authoritative pressure of her pencil since 1978 - and after a lifetime of improving the words of others, she has written her own book, *Between You & Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen*. She tells NPR's Linda Wertheimer that the title comments on a common mistake, "using 'I' instead of 'me' in phrases such as 'between you and me,' after any preposition or as the object of a verb." How can you tell when you're messing it up? Put the "I" first. "You might make a mistake - I hope not - and say 'between you and I,'" Norris says, "but you would never make the mistake of saying 'between I and you.'"

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### **The Things I Carried Back** (New York Times)

CAMBRIDGE, England - THE light was fading on the hills above the Arno, and my closest friend in the careworn ranks of foreign correspondents was sitting cross-legged on a canopied Chinese daybed, in a lovely old tree-shaded house in his native village, a brisk walk from the heart of Florence.

His name was Tiziano Terzani, one of Italy's most celebrated writers, and on that weekend, a decade ago, he was host with his wife, Angela, for the marriage of their daughter in a soaring renaissance basilica in Florence.



At 65, Tiziano was in the final weeks of a terminal cancer, and he used a languid lunch the day after the wedding to offer, from his place on the daybed, a personal farewell, along with some gentle wisdom he'd accrued in 40 years as a roaming reporter for the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* and leading Italian newspapers and as the author of a library of deeply engaging books of adventure and reflection.

"Never forget," he told the rapt gathering of musicians, physicians, politicians, entrepreneurs, writers, diplomats and reporters. "It's not how far you've traveled, it's what you've brought back."

If I have been remembering Tiziano with a special fondness in recent days, it is because I, too, have reached the 40-year milestone in my career at The New York Times, and formally retired last week, six months past my 70th birthday.

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### **The Real Problem with Judith Miller** (Politico)

Judith Miller has returned to center stage with an autobiography, *The Story: A Reporter's Journey*. The Story traces Miller's many stations of the journalistic cross-as an affirmative action hire and clueless rookie at the New York Times, as the Times Cairo bureau chief, Times Paris correspondent, Times Washington reporter, book author and, most famously,



as a national security reporter whose work for the Times before and after the Iraq war drew hot fire from detractors who accused her of relying on dubious sources, and worse.



Writing with a scythe, Miller settles scores with her many foes-Patrick Fitzgerald, the special prosecutor who jailed her for almost 60 days, New York Times Executive Editor Bill Keller who pushed her out of the paper, Valerie Plame and Joe Wilson, Times Publisher Arthur Sulzberger Jr., Times public editor Daniel Okrent, former Washington Post media reporter Howard Kurtz-as well as her legion of critics in the press.

Including me.

## The Final Word

### *Man Retires, Moves, Discovers His Doppelganger*



This story starts when Neil Richardson retired and moved to Braintree, a small town in Essex, northeast of London. Richardson didn't know his new neighbors, but strangely, they knew him.

"[As] I walked through the streets," he tells NPR's Rachel Martin, "I was really surprised at how many people waved to me and said, 'Hello, John!' 'Hello, John!' "

One person in a cafe even said to him, "You're John Jemison, aren't you?"

This went on for months, until he finally ran into the real John Jemison. Ignorant of each

other, they each signed up for a trip to a British Library exhibition on the Magna Carta. The hellos began again, Richardson says, on the bus to London.

"I heard someone say" - but not to Richardson this time - " 'Hello, John.' 'Hello, Mr. Jemison.' "

"At that point," Jemison continues the story, "Neil said to me, 'You must be John Jemison.' And I said, 'Yes, I am. What have I done now?' "

Click [here](#) to read more.

## Today in History - April 13, 2015

**By The Associated Press**

Today is Monday, April 13, the 103rd day of 2015. There are 262 days left in the year.

### **Today's Highlight in History:**

On April 13, 1965, 16-year-old Lawrence Wallace Bradford Jr. was appointed by New York Republican Jacob Javits to be the first black page of the U.S. Senate.

### **On this date:**

In 1613, Pocahontas, daughter of Chief Powhatan, was captured by English Capt. Samuel Argall in the Virginia Colony. (During a yearlong captivity, Pocahontas converted to Christianity and ultimately opted to stay with the English. )

In 1742, Handel's "Messiah" had its first public performance in Dublin, Ireland.

In 1743, the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, was born in Shadwell in the Virginia Colony.

In 1861, at the start of the Civil War, Fort Sumter in South Carolina fell to Confederate forces.

In 1912, the Royal Flying Corps, a predecessor of Britain's Royal Air Force, was created.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the Jefferson Memorial in Washington D.C., on the 200th anniversary of the third American president's birth.

In 1958, Van Cliburn of the United States won the first International Tchaikovsky Competition for piano in Moscow; Russian Valery Klimov won the violin competition.

In 1964, Sidney Poitier became the first black performer in a leading role to win an Academy Award for his performance in "Lilies of the Field." Patricia Neal was named best

actress for "Hud"; best picture went to "Tom Jones."

In 1970, Apollo 13, four-fifths of the way to the moon, was crippled when a tank containing liquid oxygen burst. (The astronauts managed to return safely.)

In 1975, the President of Chad, Francois Tombalbaye (tahn-bahl-BAH'-yeh), was killed in a military coup.

In 1986, Pope John Paul II visited the Great Synagogue of Rome in the first recorded papal visit of its kind to a Jewish house of worship.

In 1992, the Great Chicago Flood took place as the city's century-old tunnel system and adjacent basements filled with water from the Chicago River.

Ten years ago: A defiant Eric Rudolph pleaded guilty to carrying out the deadly bombing at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and three other attacks in back-to-back court appearances in Birmingham, Alabama, and Atlanta. Contract worker Jeffrey Ake (ayk) was shown at gunpoint on a videotape aired by Al-Jazeera television, two days after he was kidnapped near Baghdad. (His fate remains unknown.) Gymnast Paul Hamm (hahm) received the 75th Sullivan Award as the nation's top amateur athlete.

Five years ago: World leaders concluded a 47-nation nuclear security conference in Washington, endorsing President Barack Obama's call for securing all of the globe's vulnerable nuclear materials within four years, but offering few specifics for achieving that goal. First lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden paid a surprise visit to Haiti, the scene of a devastating earthquake three months earlier.

One year ago: The head of the United Nations' expert panel on climate change said the cost of keeping global warming in check was "relatively modest," but only if the world acted quickly to reverse the buildup of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere. Three people were shot to death at two sites in suburban Kansas City; suspect Frazier Glenn Miller, a white supremacist, was allegedly targeting Jews (none of the victims was Jewish). Thirty-six people were killed when a bus slammed into a broken-down truck in Veracruz, Mexico. Bubba Watson won the Masters for the second time in three years.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Stanley Donen is 91. Former Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., is 82. Actor Lyle Waggoner is 80. Actor Edward Fox is 78. Actor Paul Sorvino is 76. Rhythm-and-blues singer Lester Chambers is 75. Movie-TV composer Bill Conti is 73. Rock musician Jack Casady is 71. Actor Tony Dow is 70. Singer Al Green is 69. Actor Ron Perlman is 65. Actor William Sadler is 65. Singer Peabo Bryson is 64. Bandleader/rock musician Max Weinberg is 64. Bluegrass singer-musician Sam Bush is 63. Rock musician Jimmy Destri is 61. Singer-musician Louis Johnson (The Brothers Johnson) is 60. Comedian Gary Kroeger is 58. Actress Sandra Santiago is 58. Sen. Bob Casey Jr., D-Pa., is 55. Rock musician Joey Mazzola (Sponge) is 54. Chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov is 52. Actress Page Hannah is 51. Actress-comedian Caroline Rhea (RAY) is 51. Rock musician Lisa Umberger is 50. Rock musician Marc Ford is 49. Reggae singer Capleton is 48. Actor Ricky Schroder is 45. Rock singer Aaron Lewis (Staind) is 43. Actor Bokeem Woodbine is 42. Singer Lou Bega is 40. Actor-producer Glenn Howerton is 39. Actor Kyle Howard is 37.

Actress Kelli Giddish (TV: "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit") is 35. Actress Courtney Peldon is 34. Pop singer Nellie McKay (mih-KY') is 33. Actress Allison Williams is 27. Actress Hannah Marks is 22.

***Thought for Today: "Happiness is not the absence of problems but the ability to deal with them." - Charles Louis de Montesquieu, French philosopher (1689-1755).***

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