



Paul Shane <pjshane@gmail.com>

Connecting - November 11, 2015

Paul Stevens <stevenspl@live.com>

Reply-To: stevenspl@live.com

To: pjshane@gmail.com

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A salute to Connecting veterans



Colleagues,

I, [name], do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.

Good Wednesday morning - and to all my fellow veterans who are members of the Connecting family - and to all veterans, everywhere - Happy Veterans Day 2015!

With that military Oath of Office above, one enters into the employ of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard - and for the first - and last - time in our lives, our fate is completely in the hands of others. It is a feeling you never forget.

Thanks to those of you who shared the stories of your military service for this special Veterans Day edition. I found them to be fascinating and I trust you will feel the same way. If you weren't able to respond or missed seeing the call for your story, send it along today and I will publish tomorrow when Connecting returns to its normal format.

A few days ago, our colleague **Sandy Johnson** shared:

My Alexandria VA church was built during WWII in the shadow of the Pentagon so we have annual Veterans Day Sunday. This line from yesterday's call to prayer struck a chord: "In their final deployment, may they dwell in the House of the Lord."

So true. Thanks to all our veterans for their service!

Paul

Here are your stories:

Mercer Bailey - Because I wore glasses I was not inducted until after the fighting in WW2 was over. I was just shy of 19 and had been sent from the Atlanta bureau to help open an AP correspondency in Mobile, Ala. I was there a few months when Uncle Sam called. After basic training in Arkansas and advanced training in Texas, I was shipped to Yokohama, Japan. and assigned to the 44th Criminal Investigation Detachment, the Army's detective unit of the Military Police. A Japanese police photographer took a liking to me and my partner. When we all were free, he took us to Mt. Suribachi, to a school where young girls were trained in the fine arts of Japanese culture, and once to a local track meet. He persuaded me to enter a heel-toe race. You had to put your heel down first. No sprinting. I finished third in a field of about 15. But the race supervisor disqualified the first two and, over my objections, awarded me first prize, a small wooden bowl. I gave the bowl to my Japanese friend.

I was lucky to miss the fighting. And I enjoyed my Japanese assignment. Went in Oct. 5, 1945, was discharged Feb. 8, 1947.

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Joseph Benham - I was on active duty in the Army from August 1955 through July 1958 - stateside the whole time, at Ft Slocum NY, Camp Chaffee Ark (by far the worst duty), Ft Baker CA, Letterman General Hospital and finally at Fitzsimmons General Hospital, where I was invalidated-out as the Brits say. The Army called it retirement on disability, as they turned me over to the Veterans Administration.

However, the most vivid memory is from the two years in the 36th Division of the Texas National Guard.

While we were at Ft Hood for summer training, Audie Murphy, America's most decorated soldier in WWII, came from Hollywood to fulfill his obligation as a reserve captain. He aced all of the required courses: bayonet, rifle, pistol, grenade, hand-to-hand combat, etc., while everybody from bird colonels on down (I was a corporal) watched in awe.

Murphy had been out of the Army for 10 years, but looked about the same age and in the same condition as when he was knocking off great numbers of Germans in France - which may help explain his success as a movie actor.

I served with a lot of men who had seen combat in WWII and some who were coming back from Korea. Two of the most impressive were survivors of the Bataan Death March and years in a Japanese prison camp. They didn't talk much about that, beyond saying that

they were glad that our Army patrols got to the camp before they were machine-gunned by the guards.

They certainly made most of the rest of us GIs realize how lucky we were.

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Brian Bland - After four years of ROTC at the University of Illinois, I was commissioned a 2nd Lt. in the U. S. Army in 1963 and, after inactive status during grad school, I served more than three years active duty, leaving with the rank of Captain in 1968.



I spent my first two-plus years with the Army Photographic Agency's Mobile TV Detachment, based in NYC, then in Pennsylvania. It was a sort of traveling producer's job that took me to Washington, D.C., Ft. Benning, Georgia, and Dugway Proving Ground, Utah, among others.

My final active duty year, (Feb. '67-Feb. '68) was in Vietnam, running the 25th Infantry Division's Combat Photo Detachment out of Cu Chi and, for six weeks or so, out of Dau Tieng. The area is well known to many an AP reporter and photographer, including Nick Ut and Paul Harrington, whom I became friends with in the Los Angeles bureau years later.

One interesting side note: when the Mobile TV Detachment was in NYC, it was physically part of the Army Pictorial Center in the Astoria/Long Island City area, a site now occupied in part by the Museum of the Moving Image. I recommend the museum highly.

My best to all vets and to everyone.

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Hal Buell - The U.S. Army, after basic training, thought I would make a Signal Corps photographer, sent me to photo school at Fort Monmouth, NJ, though I had been teaching photography at Northwestern. Then I was assigned to Tokyo. 'Twas a sweet post, billeted in downtown Tokyo, covering army and general news in Japan. And work with Stars&Stripes. And a special assignment for six weeks to Taipei to setup a photo operation for MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group)...

But the best part was a job working two or three nights a week at the AP in the Asahi building just off Tokyo's Ginza. The job was shared with two other Stripers; one of us had to be there every night for four fours. We rewrote Kyodo's English language stories and copy transmitted in from Asian points. A Japanese staff that did not speak English, but could read Morse code, monitored Pyongyang Radio news broadcasts, and typed the transmissions one letter at a time. We polished that copy.

Worked with AP's foreign correspondents - Gene Kramer, Forrest (Woody) Edwards, Jim Cary and Murray Fromson. Bob Eunson was chief of bureau who wrote a letter of recommendation when I was discharged near Chicago. That helped get me a job as a radio writer in Chicago where Al Orton was the COB. And I stayed with AP for 41 years, part of it back in Japan as Asia Photo Editor.

How I got to Japan is a story hard to believe.

After graduating from photo school a recruit could volunteer for the U.S. and be sent to Korea, volunteer for Europe and be sent to Korea, volunteer for Asia and be sent to Korea. I volunteered for a U.S. assignment and was given orders for Ft. Lewis, WA, which was the first stop enroute to Korea. I wrote to a friend who was on Stars&Stripes; could he get me on the newspaper. He wrote back on one of those flimsy airmail sheets that folded up into a letter; can't help you unless you can get to Camp Drake, the big processing base outside Tokyo.

At Ft Lewis, on that eventful day, I stood in line with other grunts. Behind a counter there stood a Master Sergeant, three stripes up and three down, a diamond in the middle and service bars the length of his sleeve. He stamped each recruits tag, "K" for Korea bound. Before he stamped my card I took out my now bedraggled, handwritten email letter and showed it to him. He scanned it quickly, said, "If you don't make it, you still will go to Korea." And he stamped "J." Of the 1,500 troops on the USS Mann, only 12 of us dropped off in Yokohama.



I fell in love with Japan and vowed to return, which I finally did with AP as a full correspondent. That moment with that grizzled old sergeant and his stamp was literally the defining moment of my life, but damned it if I can remember his face. All I remember is all those stripes on his sleeve.

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Darrell Condon - USMC 1965 - 1971. I served with VMFA 334 in Da Nang, 1968 and Chu Lai, 1969. I returned stateside in September 1969 to my beautiful wife and daughter and met my 9 month old son for the first time.

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John Epperson - I served in the United States Air Force during height of the cold war 1966-1970. I served in a reconnaissance and intel squadron of the Strategic Air Command (SAC). Pretty exciting business some days....!!! I am still proud to say I am a USAF and SAC veteran, outfits I considered as best in the business. Cheers and thank you to all our veterans and wire service friends on this Veterans Day 2015.

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Claude Erbsen - US Navy active duty from 1961 to 1965, mainly at the Pentagon, but also briefly at Guantanamo and on the Cuban Quarantine during the 1962 missile crisis.

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Ken Fields - sharing this story from 1987 Kansas-Missouri AP Log.

Meet Your Staff

Techs Once Served In Same Viet Village

St. Louis technicians **Bruce Olmsted** and **Ken Fields** were working together long before they became partners at the AP in St. Louis. Before they even knew each other, actually.

The two were in the Army and served in the same South Vietnamese village at the same time in 1971, although they don't recall ever having met.

Olmsted, 35, started working for the AP in October 1969 at the technical center that used to be in St. Louis.

He was drafted in 1970 and after a two-year hitch with the Army, **Olmsted**, a native of the St. Louis area, returned to the AP in the summer of 1972. He worked in East Brunswick, N.J., Detroit and Chicago before coming home to St. Louis in the summer of 1973.

Olmsted became communications supervisor in



St. Louis technicians Bruce Olmsted, left, and Ken Fields.

St. Louis in 1977, about a year before **Fields** arrived.

Fields, 37, who is from Alton, joined the AP in St. Louis in 1978, transferred to the Indianapolis bureau in 1979 and returned to St. Louis about a year later.

The pair has been teaming since then to keep AP equipment operating in eastern Missouri and in the Metro East area of Illinois.

"It's satisfying to know we are keeping the AP report flowing in a large area," says **Olmsted**. "It's gratifying for Kenny and me to get a member back in business quickly."

Olmsted and his wife, **Barbara**, have three children, **Matthew**, 6; **Jennifer**, 4; and **Julie**, 1½. His free time is usually spent with the kids, but he finds time to watch the football Cardinals – though he hesitates to admit that – and attends the horse races at Fairmount Park.

Fields and his wife, **Jackie**, have a 2-year-old son, **Ryan**. Much of **Fields'** free time also is spent tending to the little one and showing him good times. He and **Jackie** enjoy hunting for antiques, and he tinkers on his home computer whenever possible.

Daniel Miles Sr. Dies

Daniel Black Miles Sr., newspaper publisher and mayor of Clinton, died in a Clinton hospital Dec. 12 at the age of 69.

Miles, elected in April to his second term as mayor, was co-publisher of the **Democrat Publishing Co.** with his brother-in-law, **Mahlon Kelly White**. Miles' son **Dan Jr.** is general manager of the family-owned **Clinton Daily Democrat**.

Miles was administrative assistant to U.S. Sen. Edward V. Long, serving as director of the Missouri Democrat's Washington office from 1960 to 1969. He became editor of the **Democrat** in 1950 when his family bought the newspaper and after his decade in Washington, he returned to the newspaper as editor-publisher.

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Joe Frazier - AP, 1972-2009. USMC 1967-69. Vietnam 1968-1969. Artillery, interpreter.

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Steve Graham - USMC 1957-1961 (After Korea, before Vietnam and the Japanese yen was 360 to the dollar).

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Albert Habhab - U.S. Army, World War II. I graduated from high school on January 20, 1944. I went into the Army on January 25, 1944....I completed 17 weeks of basic training at Camp Croft. I came home on a short leave, I don't remember how long. I was then sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi, where I took additional training. I thought I was going to the South Pacific. Instead I was transferred to the 87th Infantry Division at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I took additional training there with the 87th. I was with Company C, 346th Infantry. From there, our division went to Camp Kilmer for overseas duty. That is in New Jersey as I recall. We were there just two or three days, not very long.

I was 18 when I went into the service. I turned 19 when I left the camp in Mississippi. I believe they held me there until I turned 19. I think, at that time, there was a regulation that you had to be 19 years old before you could be sent overseas. We went over on the Queen Elizabeth. Only took four or five days. We zigzagged across the ocean. We did not have a battleship escort. We were told that the Queen was fast enough to outrun any of the Germany submarines which were in the Atlantic Ocean at that time. It was a unique but interesting experience. We had daily drills on the boat. We were assigned to a certain life boat. You had to be at your lifeboat at a certain time. We did that during our entire trip. We landed at Glasgow, Scotland, and from there were transported by train to a camp in England. We trained there for two or three weeks. I was trained as a rifleman.



His Army unit took part in the Battle of the Bulge, and Habhab received a Bronze Star for saving the life of a fellow soldier while under heavy German fire. After the war, he completed law school, worked as an attorney, served as mayor of Fort Dodge, Iowa, for a record 14 years, served as a district court judge and then was appointed as a judge with the Iowa Court of Appeals, where he was later named chief judge.

He said: "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 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."

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Larry Hamlin - U.S. Army 1965-1968. My three year military "career" started with a draft notice when I was a Maintenance Man trainee in the AP 10th Avenue shop. I had always boasted to my friends that I would never be drafted. So, with draft notice in hand, I promptly enlisted. I primarily did that so I would have a little control over what I would be doing and where I would go. It worked, for the most part. I picked Teletype repair as my MOS and was told to pick three geographical locations for my permanent duty station, of which the United States could not be one. I survived basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana. That was probably the worst 12 weeks of my life. Spinal Meningitis was rampant at the time and, in order to help prevent it, we had to open all windows in the barracks. Half down on one side, half up on the other. Wouldn't have been so bad had it not been December - February! I spent the next three months at Fort Gordon, Georgia for Teletype training. Then, I went on a seven day cruise aboard the USNS Geiger. Destination: Bremerhaven, Germany. It wasn't a bad trip except for the part between when I got on the boat in New York and got off in Germany. I spent the next 2 1/2 years assigned to Detachment C, 532nd Signal Service Company, Coleman Barracks, Sandhofen, Germany (just outside Mannheim). When DeGaulle kicked the troops out of France, our

Headquarters Company moved in with us, the 532nd was dissolved and we became USASTRATCOM EUROPE. During those 2 1/2 years, I learned just enough German to get by; "ein Bier bitte" and "wo ist der Bahnhof".

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George Hanna - Two years (1951-53) in Marine Corps, all stateside (Parris Island). Upon long reflection there was nothing humorous at Parris Island, S.C., in 1951-53. I went back in recent years for my grandson's graduation from boot camp and there were still no grins.

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Bob Haring - My favorite military story is the time I was personally fired by a commanding general.

I was editor of the Fort Wood News at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo., and ran that weekly much like a civilian newspaper, covering all sorts of events on the post. One week was especially violent, with arson fires destroying a chapel and a couple of other buildings, a truck running through a column of marching trainees, etc.

Of course, I splashed these prominently on the front page -- with photos.

The newspaper was distributed on Friday mornings and typically I then went out for coffee with some friends, so I was out of the office when Brig. Gen. N.A. Costello marched in.

He demanded, "Where is the editor of this damned newspaper?"

Told, by the colonel who actually was over the newspaper and public information offices, that I was out of the office, Costello jammed his finger into the colonel's chest and said, "Well, get this. He is no longer the editor. You are and I will hold you responsible."

He then stormed out, with his retinue of aides.

When I came back, Col. Ray Wismer called me into his office. He told me what had happened. Then he said, "Costello is only going to be commander for a few more months. Can you run the newspaper to keep him off our back until then?"

I of course said yes.

So for the next few weeks we changed. We didn't alter our coverage. But I no longer used big headlines and pictures. The front page was mostly bland one-column headlines with no pictures except a few mug shots.

Eventually Costello was replaced by another general.

A couple of weeks later, the officer in charge came to me and said, "The general thinks the newspaper is very dull. Can you do something to liven it up?"

Of course. I just went back to a civilian-style format, with big headless and big pictures.

After a couple of revised issues, the officer in charge reported, "The general likes the new format. Keep it up."

So I did.

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Jerry Harkavy - I recently began work as a volunteer in the Southern Maine Agency on Aging's year-old Vet to Vet program, in which veterans are paired off with other veterans in order to provide companionship, help them fight isolation and link them to needed services and benefits.

We underwent nine hours of training in subjects ranging from PTSD and cognitive deficits to listening skills and setting boundaries. We make at least two home visits a month to our vets and contact them by phone during the weeks that we don't visit.

I made my first visit to my wheelchair-bound veteran last week and I can't imagine how it could have gone any better. We share a lot of common interests and it looks like a budding friendship is building. The program is open to all veterans regardless of branch of service or combat status. I served in the Army from 1965-68, spending the final year in Vietnam.

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Lindel Hutson - I let myself be drafted after graduating from college in 1969 and served two years in the Army.

After basic at Fort Polk, La., I was made permanent party at the public information office at Fort Dix, NJ where I spent much of my time writing sports for the post newspaper.

The second year I was transferred to Belgium and SHAPE headquarters, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. There, I put out a newspaper for American personnel in Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg.

My most exciting day in the Army came on Feb. 11, 1971, the day I 'retired' from the Army.

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Bill Kaczor - I served in the Air Force from January 1969 through December 1972. This was during the Vietnam War, but other than basic and technical training in Texas and Illinois, I spent my entire hitch as a flight simulator specialist at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., with the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing.

One of my favorite memories is about how I got into flight simulators. I joined the Air Force after graduating from college just a step ahead of the draft board in 1968. I thought the war was a bad idea and I wasn't interested in losing my life to prop up

a corrupt regime in South Vietnam. I saw the Air Force as giving me a better chance of avoiding death or injury than if I had been drafted into the Army. I tested well and was guaranteed training in one of my top three career field choices, which were public affairs, intelligence and weather. I got my second choice, intelligence, but upon arriving at basic training I learned I was chosen for language training. Oh, oh, I thought, this would be one-way ticket to Vietnam, but I first had to pass a language aptitude test, which I made sure I failed. So, I was sent to see the chief master sergeant in charge of putting square pegs in round holes. He told me I could pick anything I wanted since my prior test scores were so good. I chose public affairs. He said that was the only exception to what he had just said because that field was being filled with women. I fell back on choice three, weather. He said he had something better than just weather - weather equipment repair. He was right.

When I got to Chanute Air Force Base, Ill., for technical training I got bumped every time a new class started. It also was a favorite choice for retraining by former bomb loaders whose skills in that field were no longer needed when they returned from combat tours, and they got priority over new recruits. So, I served as messenger boy and floor polisher for several months until the Air Force finally realized I'd never get into weather equipment repair class and issued some new orders. In the meantime my wife had sought a job in the base public affairs office, but was turned away because of a civilian hiring freeze. She did, however, let the PA staffers know that her husband had college and professional journalism experience but was whiling away his time delivering messages and polishing floors. The base general signed off on my transfer to the PA office, but he was overruled by Air Force HQ, which said it would send Chanute a freshly minted second lieutenant to help out. The Air Force then sent me to flight simulator training, which turned out to be a big boost to my journalistic career. I was on the 6 a.m. to 12 noon shift at Eglin's simulator shop, which was more akin to Sgt. Bilko's motor pool than it was to John Wayne's Green Berets. That left me the rest of the day and weekends to moonlight first at the Playground (now Northwest Florida) Daily News and then the Pensacola News Journal. It also earned me the nickname "Scoop" back at the simulator shop.

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Chuck Lewis - USMCR 1963-1967.

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Jim Limbach - U.S. Army 1965-68. Went from college radio to AFKN in Seoul, Korea, and eventually a 34-year career with AP Radio.

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Richard Lipsey - I served from 1968-88, Army, infantry branch, commissioned through OCS at Fort Benning.

As a lieutenant in Germany, I was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment,

part of the 3rd Armor Division. A World War II German infantry regiment had been raised in that same area where my battalion was stationed, around Friedberg, north of Frankfurt. The German unit held grand reunions every two years in which it took over a hotel in Friedberg for a weekend. The American battalion commander and his wife were invited guests for the opening banquet on Friday night. At the time, our unit had no fluent German speakers. I was the battalion intelligence officer and had studied German in college but was not very proficient. However, my wife had been a German major in college and an exchange student for a summer, so the CO took me along as his adjutant -- because of my wife's fluency.

My wife was the belle of the ball, spending most of the evening dancing with the German regimental adjutant and many others. She said it was mentally exhausting because many of them spoke a dialect that she had a hard time deciphering.

The German regimental commander still suffered from war wounds so spent most of the evening at the dinner table, talking with what seemed like a hundred or more of his former soldiers who came over to pay their respects, as well as to my CO. I spent much of the evening speaking with the German CO's wife, who was American born and whose parents had returned to Germany with her in the 1930s. Fortunately, she spoke fluent English. She was probably 20 years younger than her husband. We had a very enjoyable evening and saw a side of German life that was not open to many foreigners.

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Dave Lubeski - Army - 1967-1968. I was a medic in the 2nd Battalion, 13th Infantry near Mannheim, German. Here I am (wearing the poncho) with two fellow medics next to my jeep. The second photo is me with the same two fellow medics 40 years later at a reunion in Branson in 2008.



Dick Lipsey (center) receiving captain's bars.





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Larry Margasak - I was in the Pennsylvania Air National Guard from 1965 to 1971, while I was in the Harrisburg bureau. I wore my hair pretty long in those days, but would cut it when it became really overgrown before our one weekend a month active duty. Once, in-between active duty weekends, with my hair especially long, we were flying the governor to the National Governors Conference and I was going along for The AP. (How could I refuse, the conference was in San Juan, P.R.). One of the other officers looked at me

with my overgrown locks, then looked at our commander, and said, "He's one of ours." I got a puzzled look, but nothing else was said. My hair was nice and short for the next duty weekend.

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Brad Martin - United States Navy, USS San Bernardino LST 1189, 1972-76. Two Vietnam campaigns and we were in theater when the war ended in '75. No special stories about my time in service that are remarkable to note.

I have heard and read so much from the story tellers and picture takers at AP over the years that anything would pale in comparison to the dedication and sacrifice so many others endured.

So please relay my best wishes and thanks to all AP vets for their courage, heroism and service to our country overall.

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Bill McCloskey - I had been a professional journalist -- weekends and summers at WIP radio's newsroom in Philadelphia during high school and college -- for five years by the time I got drafted into the Army in 1966. By luck of the draw, I was never sent to any Army school after basic training because so many new troops were going through the system all the schools were full. The college graduates got assigned to offices on the base Fort Jackson, South Carolina where I occasionally wrote for the base newspaper, the Leader.

When I got orders to go to Vietnam as a company clerk for a signal company in the Mekong Delta I got the name of the head of the Armed Forces Radio station in Saigon and sent the man an audition tape and a resume. I later learned that he tried to "requisition" me to work at AFVN, but that the 1st Signal Brigade decided if someone else wanted me, they must need me. I was assigned not to the Delta, but to headquarters in Saigon where I helped write and edit the brigade newspaper, travel around the country to record interviews with signalmen and submit them to their hometown radio station and contribute press releases that were published in Stars & Stripes. Technically, I was doing PR for the Army's phone company. Ironically, when I left AP in 1986 I went to work doing PR for another phone company BellSouth.

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Joe McGowan - I served two years active duty on a ship during the Korean War and 15 years in the US Navy Reserve.

It went this way: I joined the reserve while a student at U. Wyoming. Thursday nights a group of us drove to Cheyenne for the weekly USNR meeting. Summers we had to go on two weeks active duty. I served on three destroyers and had two weeks one summer at the Navy Training base, San Diego.

After graduating, I volunteered for active duty since I could not make future plans. I was assigned to the USS PCE (Patrol Craft Escort) 899 in Milwaukee, WI. I wondered what a ship was doing in Milwaukee but soon found it was a reserve training ship. We had a crew of 75, one-half the normal crew. During the summer months we got 75 reservists every two weeks and we trained them in every shipboard activity. I got out in Feb. 1955 as a Yeoman 2nd class (E-5). Returning to Wyoming and joining AP in Cheyenne, I got a letter from the Navy Department welcoming me back to Reserves and saying since I had a college education, I could qualify for a direct commission as an officer. I went to Denver and became an Ensign in the reserve. Later, while with AP in Miami I advanced to LTjg.

Things went well until AP sent me to New Delhi. I was covering wars and such things and not taking Navy correspondence courses or going on two weeks active duty in the summer. Finally I got a letter from the Navy Dept. saying they would accept my resignation. I resigned. A total 17 years!

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Brendan Riley - Just out of college (and out of deferments), I went active from a reserve unit and served as a quartermaster (navigation team) on the USS Haleakala, AE25, a Navy ammunition ship, from 1968 to 1970. Our job was to steam up and down the coast of Vietnam, serving as a Wal-Mart of bombs for other Navy ships.

There were some scary events, including a major boiler explosion that left us a disabled sitting duck for a couple of days in Da Nang harbor, but nothing like the conditions faced by combat troops on land. Because I had worked briefly as a reporter on my hometown Vallejo paper, I was "volunteered" as the ship's hometown news writer and photographer. Learned to soup film, but chemical reactions were hilariously unpredictable in the photo developing trays given the hot South China Sea weather and darkroom location -- a cramped storeroom in the ship's galley.

Back home, I took the AP test while my ship was drydocked for repairs in China Basin, San Francisco. Walked off the ship in June 1970 with discharge papers on one day, and into the AP bureau in Fox Plaza building on Market Street the next day. Can't say that COB Paul Finch was any less of an authoritarian than my captain (Queeg, I think his name was...) but had the good fortune to have Jim Lagier as news editor. And then there was the additional good fortune of spending most of my 39 AP years covering crazy and colorful Nevada politics -- the equivalent of catching fish in a barrel.

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Jeff Rowe -- US Air Force, early 1970s. This was not the best time to be in the armed forces. Protesters might be gathered at the base gates and you had to travel in uniform to get the military standby air travel discount. Rarely would any civilians talk to you. Once I was with two Marine officers and they were spit on.

Decades later, when units started coming back from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, I noticed communities would organize welcome-home parties the likes of which Vietnam-era soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen only could dream about. So I reported a story for the Orange County Register on the welcome gatherings and interviewed several organizers, some of whom said they had been war protesters during the Vietnam years. As I recall, at least two of the welcome-back party organizers acknowledged that part of their motivation was that they had demonstrated against military members long ago. They realized now that they had blamed the wrong people, that military men and women were not policy makers.

It was one of those revealing moments in a journalism, the discovery of a larger truth in an otherwise tame weekend feature piece.

I also learned what turned out to be a telling lesson about the future of journalism in those years. Each morning, I noticed senior officers would get a few sheets of paper containing neat summaries of world news events in the prior 12 hours. Each of these news items typically ran three sentences to a short paragraph -- perfect for commanders with many demands on their time and few spare moments to peruse a newspaper or linger over a television news broadcast.

Now most of us are ultra-busy like those senior officers and we get our news summarized just like they did -- only now those summaries fit nicely on a cell-phone screen.

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Paul Stevens - U.S. Air Force, 1968-72, with Strategic Air Command and Tactical Air Command wings at Little Rock AFB and with TAC headquarters at Langley AFB, Virginia.



Linda and I made one of our strongest friendships with Robert and Lynda Zimmer at Little Rock, where Bob (pictured at left) and I edited the base newspaper, the Air Scoop. Both of us joined the AP after our service ended. Bob worked in the Little Rock and Phoenix bureaus, and was the longtime AP Champaign, Illinois, correspondent until his death in 1992. Lynda is a good friend and a Connecting colleague. I used

the GI Bill to return to Kansas for a master's degree and then launched a 36-year AP career in six bureaus.

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Mike Tharp served in the U.S. Army 1969-70, including 13 months in Vietnam.

He wrote for a monthly Army magazine, 'Hurricane,' and remembers a trip to South Vietnam's Central Highlands where he wrote a story about the Montagnards hill tribe. He also recalls peeing his pants the first time he came under small arms fire while pulling guard in a sandbagged tower. He left the service with an honorable discharge, Bronze Star and four lifelong friends. He is shown in center of the photo at right with two Army buddies.



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Harold Waters - PFC Harold T. Waters. 30 months in U.S. Army: 26 months overseas in European Theatre. 898th AAA Battalion (Anti Aircraft Artillery). Joined unit as replacement in North Africa September, 1943. Left North Africa for Italy. Landed in Italy D Day+1. Fought thru Italy (Mud, Mules and Mountains) till August of 1944. Pulled back to Naples and shipped to Corsica for Infantry training. From there we went to Southern France by LST. Were assigned to 100th Infantry Division. Went thru the heart of France, into Belgium and Germany. Was in Germany when war ended in May, 1945. Was discharged from Army in Texas, October 31, 1945. Got with my childhood sweetheart and married November 14, 1945. This November 14, we will have been married 70 years. I think it'll stick. My 93rd birthday is November 24, 2015.

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Lew Wheaton - I was in the U.S. Navy from 1965 to 1970, including two years on the USS Wexford County, LST-1168. In my time aboard we had one deployment to Vietnam in 1967-68 that included North Vietnam's Tet offensive, a turning point in the war. No direct involvement in that bloody part of the conflict for us, just the drudgery of in and out of Danang and the various ramps we beached on to pick up and deliver Marines and supplies.



One thing sticks in my mind: On our return to the states we went to San Francisco, and a couple of teenage sailors in my division, farm kids from the Midwest, as I remember, went into town to see the hippies. They went to Haight-Ashbury, in uniform. Big mistake. On return to the ship, both were very upset, one in tears, saying they had been spit upon, harassed, ridiculed and called baby-killers.

Different times. I'm glad to see the respect and appreciation vets coming back from our current wars receive.

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Joe Yeninas - 5/10/34 - USMC 2/53 to 2/57 - Radio Repairman - Korea:

Headquarters

Company, 2nd Bn, 7th Marines 11/53 to 2/54 -- 2/54 to 3/55 Anti Tank Company, 7th Marines (5 tanks and a platoon of 75mm recoilless rifles), 3/55 to 2/57 8th Engineer Bn,

Camp LeJeune, NC.

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George Zucker - I spent four years in the Air Force during the Korean war as a military journalist from 1954 to 1958, serving in Texas, Alaska and Georgia. I've written a number of stories on my military experiences for Connecting. The latest was "Hard Copy."

Got a story to share?

Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!



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