
Connecting - November 13, 2015

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Connecting

November 13, 2015

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'Tell the gang hello for me'



Colleagues,

Good Friday morning!

The AP's oldest retiree, **Max Desfor**, just turned 102 - but as befitting for someone who attains that age, the celebration has continued beyond his actual birthday on Sunday.

On Wednesday, a group of White House News Photographers Association members, including AP Washington photo editor **Jon Elswick**, paid a visit to Max's home armed with a birthday cake - and their cameras. Jon describes what ensued:

Jon Elswick - Walking into Max's 10th floor home in Silver Spring, Md., I am struck by the cards - birthday cards line almost every available surface. Max's friends and family certainly haven't forgotten his 102nd birthday.

I've always been impressed with the large west-facing windows that light up the apartment and give visitors and immediate warm welcoming feeling. And then there's Max. That captivating smile along with what I've always thought of as a bit of a mischievous twinkle in his eyes are just as bright as when I first met him years ago.

A small group of White House News Photographers Association members, photo

editor Jon Elswick from the AP; Susan Biddle and Gerald Martineau, both retired from the Washington Post; and Dennis Brack, brought a birthday celebration to Max. We met in the lobby of his building, expecting to head upstairs to see Max. But here comes Max, out of the elevator with his walker and followed his nurse aide, Agnes, across the lobby to greet us. He just couldn't wait to see us.



From left: Susan Biddle, Jon Elswick, Max, Gerald Martineau and Dennis Brack

As we know, Max loves to have visitors come to see him - even though it takes a bit of doing to get arranged. At 102 you'd think most of Max's days might be the same - you'd be wrong. Max is up and dressed most days by late morning and ready for a late breakfast or early lunch, followed sometimes by a short nap.

It's then off to the mall, or out for a walk around the walking paths at Leisure World, or out to a restaurant. He keeps busy. When he's home he's found in a den, lined with windows, rocking in a comfortable recliner, sometimes watching TV, sometimes just enjoying his life.

Max can hardly wait to get the candle lit and then dig into the cupcake cake we've brought him. Ignoring offers of help, Max picks the cake up to be better able to blow the candle out. He even pauses with his lips ready to blow for the photo op that all of us have lined up for. He's then digging into the cupcakes and then licking the frosting off his fingers all the time with that Max smile.

His last words to us, as it is every time - tell the gang hello for me.



Remembering Elon Torrence



As announced in Connecting on Thursday, retired AP Topeka newsman Elon Torrence died at the age of 98 - two days after his wife Polly passed away, at 95. Funeral services for both are scheduled for today. Here are memories of Elon from some of his Connecting colleagues:

Low Ferguson - Elon Torrence joined the AP in the Topeka Capitol bureau in 1946 after U.S. Army Air Corps duty during World War II. He never left Topeka, spending his entire 36-year career as a Statehouse reporter, high school sports historian and expert political analyst. I became Topeka correspondent in 1970, 12 years before Elon retired.

When he retired in January 1982, I said Elon was a "Reporter's Reporter." Nobody had the knack Elon did for finding stories of value in places other Statehouse reporters overlooked. And he had sources few others had among legislative staffers and secretaries he had cultivated for years. Secretaries who wouldn't dare divulge what went on in closed committee meetings in the days before Kansas had Open Meetings and Open Records laws would tip Elon to important committee decisions, to the chagrin of the chairmen.

Elon also had a knack for showing up at committee meetings (we often did stories on multiple meetings that occurred at the same time). Young reporters marveled at his prescient sense of timing. Some got angry after they sat through a long, boring meeting only to have Elon show up at the precise moment some action finally was taken.

Elon was friends with all the secretaries, and, yes, with a little flirting thrown in. The secretaries brought covered dishes for a special luncheon once a year. Elon was the only reporter ever invited.

He loved high school sports, and from the time he began his Topeka career he collected football and basketball scores on nights games were played. For that the Topeka Capital-Journal paid him \$5 a night, and agreed to let him file the scores on the AP wire. The AP got the scores for free.

Elon also kept voluminous high school records. For his effort, he was inducted into the Kansas High School Activities Association's Hall of Fame.

The late Kansas City COB Fred Moen was notorious for pinching pennies for the AP. His penchant for saving company money reached its peak (or, really, the bottom) when he had his secretary rent only one room for Elon and me one year at a motel near a computer company's office where we compiled election returns in Kansas City. There was one big problem: the room was a single with just one regular-size bed. I gave Elon, who was 17 years my senior, the bed and I tried to sleep on the floor. Fred's reaction the next morning, "Well, you had a pillow didn't you?"

Some 50 young staffers, legislative relief staffers and interns worked with us during the 29 years I was Statehouse correspondent. Elon was a favorite of many of them. He was patient with them, always ready to answer their questions and provide reporting tips. The

Kansas Press Association gave its Mentoring Award to Elon in 2013.

While I minored in government and history, I had never covered government and politics until I took the Topeka assignment. I was a sports writer the first 10 years of my AP career.

Elon taught me much about cultivating sources and which agencies to pay attention to.

And he taught me how to make official homemade AP reporter's notebooks.

The first several years I was in Topeka, the Kansas Supreme Court would not provide us with printed copies of its decisions. The court would put a pile of decisions on the clerk's counter when it released them at 9 a.m. on Saturdays. We could not remove them from the counter, meaning we had to stand there and laboriously copy facts of the cases and any direct quotes we needed for our stories.

Elon taught me how to fold those legal-length pages twice so they were approximately the same size as AP's notebooks. We took copious notes on those opinion pages.

Fred Moen loved it.

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Tad Bartimus - I was barely 21 years old, out of the University of Missouri School of Journalism less than a month, when Elon Torrence took me under his wing in January 1969 as a legislative reliefer, on probation, desperate to be hired by AP. For the next three and a half months, Correspondent Dan Hamrick's regular response to my ack-ack questions was "Ask Elon." Elon answered every one. He was patient, precise, full of excellent advice, forgave (and fixed!) my mistakes, kept me from hitting the concrete, and supported and encouraged my naive ambition to go to Vietnam. I learned enough (or their recommendations hedged enough) from Elon (and Dan) to earn a transfer to Miami AP at the mid-April end of the legislative session, and I was off, launched into a quarter-century of AP reporting on four continents. Without Elon's mentoring it probably wouldn't have happened. He was the consummate gentleman, one of the kindest and BEST reporters I've ever known, and I loved him.

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Dan Biles - My association with Elon came when I joined The AP bureau for the 1975 Kansas legislative session. I was six months out of journalism school then, and worked there with him through the 1980 legislative session. But like most of us those days who wanted to be Kansas news writers, I knew about Elon before I ever met him.

While in school at K-State, we frequently heard about Elon and his time covering the In Cold Blood murders for The AP. Those stories always involved his examples of journalistic integrity and thoroughness in getting the job done despite the swirl of events around him. After school, while I was working for The Coffeyville Journal, I also would hear about Elon's personal dedication in giving up his Friday nights during high school football season to gather and post statewide school scores on the wire, so that the whole state could follow their teams.

When I got to Topeka and started working with Elon, I saw every day someone who could calmly, quietly, and professionally go about his work as a journalist in the rarefied atmosphere and spin of the State Capitol. More than once, I saw Elon stop writing while under deadline to find an obscure reference book he had squirreled away on a shelf in order to put his story into a broader perspective. Those examples will live long after the rest of us are gone.

(Dan, a former Topeka newsman, serves as a justice on the Kansas Supreme Court.)

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John Hanna - I didn't meet Elon until well after he retired, but I heard plenty of stories about him in my early years at the Statehouse. Other, veteran reporters told me that he developed this incredible, intuitive sense of timing. A committee meeting would be into its second hour, with reporters about to die of boredom, and Elon would come into the room, and the key vote would be taken, or the big argument would start, right then and there.

Elon was a walking, detailed encyclopedia of Kansas political history, and he told wonderful stories -- about meeting Harper Lee while covering the trial of Richard Hickock and Perry Smith, the men whose killings of the Clutter family inspired "In Cold Blood," or about the trouble U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts' father found himself in as Dwight Eisenhower's newly picked Republican National Committee chairman or, of course, the infamous "Triple Play."

My favorite memory is of Elon discussing that last series of events and the governor who helped engineer it, Republican Fred Hall. Elon was such a consummate gentleman, in Lew Ferguson's phrase, that he never talked ill of people he'd covered, but he let it slip that Hall was considered a little arrogant. That wonderful assessment, discreet but informative, peaked my interest and helped me understand how a party as dominant as the Kansas GOP in the 1950s could be so badly split by one man -- and cause his critics to make changes in legislative rules that were still intact nearly 60 years later.

Elon served on the state Governmental Ethics Commission for years, starting in the 1990s, and always stopped by for a visit after its meetings. If I was puzzled why

something worked the way in Kansas politics, he could explain it -- and provide the fascinating details of how a law, rule or tradition got started.

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Anita Miller - Elon was the epitome of the best in reporters. He was thorough, skilled and accurate - and always a gentleman. As a young journalist, I watched as Elon and Lew Ferguson dominated Statehouse coverage in Topeka. They had incredible recall of the issues and sources beyond any other journalists, yet they were always willing to help out those of us just starting in the business. The respect I had for them both then continues to this day.

(Anita is a former managing editor of the Topeka Capital-Journal.)

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Bill Vogrin - Elon and Polly were two of the nicest people I've ever met. Simple as that.

I met them when I arrived in the Topeka bureau in January 1982, a few weeks before Elon's retirement. I took his place in the bureau, but I could never replace him.

Of course, I can't think of Elon without mentioning Lew Ferguson, his longtime partner in Topeka (an my beloved mentor).

They were very much the odd couple. Lew was the hard-charging correspondent whose personality filled the dome, while Elon was the gentleman who seemed to glide through the Statehouse, scooping up stories.

They were a great team and their deep and mutual respect was quite obvious. I fondly recall our lunches together, long after Elon retired. Elon and Lew would banter about politics and sports and news of the day. Not a lunch with Elon went by when he didn't astound me with his amazing memory about politics or Kansas prep sports or of interviewing Phog Allen or covering the "In Cold Blood" trial in the Clutter family murders.

Even though our professional careers only overlapped a few brief weeks, Elon taught this brash, young, know-it-all reporter a lot. Fortunately, our lives overlapped considerably longer.

(Bill is a former Topeka newsman and Peoria correspondent who is editor/owner of

Connecting mailbox

'Good night, Ed'



Dudley Lehew - Today's news brings word of the death of San Francisco's legendary Carol Doda, who started the topless dancer craze in the 60's.

When also legendary Ed Dennehy retired from the general desk in the 70's, a video was made of people around the world saying "G'night Ed," which is what he said and was repeated by everybody around when he left at the end of his shift each evening.

The tape included a clip of Ms. Doda leaning back, thrusting her augmented chest forward, batting her long eyelashes and saying a very sexy and slow "Good night, Ed..."

He loved it!

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Connecting sky shot - Crawford, Nebraska



Ron Edmonds - This is the view from my friends' ranch near Crawford, Nebraska. The lights of Crawford at left illuminate the clear star filled sky on a cool Nebraska evening.

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Fascinated by the Edmund Fitzgerald

John Willis - I am one of those still fascinated by the Edmund Fitzgerald. That it could go down so quickly just doesn't make sense. But it did. I am guessing the bureaus in the Twin Cities handled most of the coverage. Are there any of those staffers who are readers of Connecting, I wonder??

I pulled up the song from You Tube last night and listened to it several times.....it is not completely accurate, but it is, as you say, haunting.....just as the videos are that have been posted over the years.....

I saw a story about Gordon Lightfoot from Milwaukee last week, where he was performing. He said he wrote the song so that the Edmund Fitzgerald would not be forgotten.....

Forty years is a long time on those Great Lakes to go without a "major" accident.....some of the credit can be given to technology, I suppose.....

Each year about this time I wonder what it must have been like for the crew that

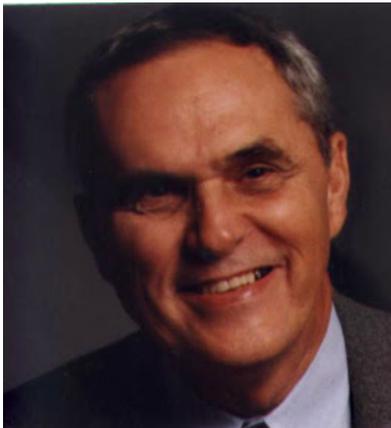
evening as the winds howled and the waves crashed against that giant ore carrier.

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Bill Neikirk's new mystery novel - 'The Copperhead Club'

Greg Nokes - I don't believe former AP staffer Bill Neikirk is on Connecting, so thought I'd pass along his Facebook announcement of a book he's about to debut. I worked with Bill covering the Treasury Department and things economic for AP in Washington in the 1970s. Bill later joined the Chicago Tribune where he spent most of his career until retiring. As one former AP staffer-turned-author to another, I wish Bill well with this book, and also with his health issues. I'll be unable to attend either of his book events, but maybe some of your readers will.

The following from Bill on his Facebook page:



"This is just to let you know that I've written a mystery novel-my first foray into fiction-writing-and we're holding a launching party on Tuesday evening, November 17th, in the Zenger Room of the National Press Club, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. You are invited, and I hope you'll be able to make it. "The Copperhead Club," is set both in Washington and in rural Kentucky, and it involves the sudden disappearance of a Washington lobbyist and a chase that leads to the hills of Kentucky and threatens the political future of a sitting president.

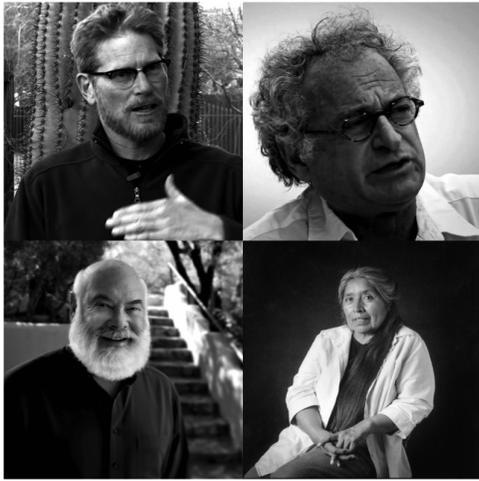
If you can't make it to the Press Club party, we hope you'll consider a second party, which we're hosting at the Hendry House, at 2411 Twenty-Fourth Street North, in Arlington, Virginia, from 5p.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday, November 19th. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be at both parties.

This is probably the best time to tell you that I'm experiencing periods of memory-loss. Ruth has stepped up to the plate to help push the book from manuscript form into book form, choosing editors, making arrangements for the launching-parties, and even posting this message on my Facebook page.

I hope to see you at one of these parties. If you are out of town, books will be available on our website that is being created this month. And of course, Ruth and I would welcome a visit by you to our home anytime.

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Mort Rosenblum among 4 Local Genius Award Recipients



Tucson is a pretty special place that's brimming with local talent, creative ideas and forward-thinking initiatives. To honor just some of the many great things happening in town that have both local and international effects, the Tucson Museum of Contemporary Art is honoring four members of the community through their 2016 MOCA Local Genius Awards.

Now in its seventh iteration, MOCA is recognizing a diverse collection of thinkers in town who offer up some very different sets of skills.

Brad Lancaster, co-founder of Desert Harvesters, is being recognized for his visionary work in rainwater harvesting. Mort Rosenblum (top right in photo montage) is a renowned journalist who currently teaches international reporting at UA and is known for his integrity in the field. Doctor Andrew Weil's work in integrative medicine focuses on both natural and preventative approaches to wellness. And last, but certainly not least, Tucson's former poet laureate Ofelia Zepeda will be honored for her commitment to teaching the Tohono O'odham language and promoting literacy in the indigenous language.

With such a varied group of recipients, you'll want to be sure to catch the events and lectures associated with the 2016 MOCA Local Genius Awards. While the final gala-which will be catered by another Local Genius, chef Janos Wilder-won't take place until April 16, 2016, events celebrating these luminaries will take place all throughout the spring. For more information on upcoming events at MOCA, visit [the museum's website](#).

Shared by Larry Blasko.

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'What happened to Muskie, for crying out loud'

Bill Beecham - Many will recall the 1972 presidential campaign involving the late Sen. Edmund S. Muskie, D-Maine. At one point, the Manchester Union-Leader ran an editorial stating that Muskie's wife, Jane, drank and used bad language during the campaign. It was reported that Muskie made an emotional speech outside the newspaper's office during a snowstorm. Muskie later said that what appeared to be tears were actually melted snow flakes. But the media kept reporting he was crying. That pretty much ended Muskie's campaign

Down the road, as a look-back story, AP writer Lee Bird of the Washington bureau showed his skills as an outstanding writer with this lead:

"Whatever happened to Sen. Edmund S. Muskie, for crying out loud."

More memories from Connecting veterans

Mike Harris - This comes a few days late, but Veterans Day always evokes memories for me of my days at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Getting there was half the fun.

It was 1966 and I was about to graduate from the University of Wisconsin and knew I would be getting a draft notice at any moment. Going to Vietnam, which was likely for a draftee at that point, had very little appeal for me. I tried to find a National Guard or Army Reserve unit that had an opening, but it seemed close to impossible.

My parents lived in Madison, WI, and I was living at home while finishing up my college degree. One afternoon, I came home to find my sister, Judy, had a friend at the house. The friend's brother was a high school classmate and I asked how he was doing. She replied that he was just about to come home from active duty with the Army Reserve. Lucky guy, I thought.

I told her about my struggles to find a unit and she said, "Well, my brother says his Reserve unit was just started six years ago and a lot of the guys in it are finishing up their time. They're looking for people."

My heart skipped a beat. I thanked her and dashed for the phone. I called information (remember doing that?) and asked for the Army Reserve Center in Dodgeville, WI, about 40 miles from Madison. The civilian clerk answered and I asked if they were looking for recruits. He said, "We sure are. There's a meeting tonight. Come on in and we'll get you started."

I actually got a speeding ticket that evening on my way to Dodgeville. But I did get signed up. At that time, you could specify when you wanted to begin active duty. I wrote, "As soon as possible after Jan. 7," which was my graduation day at the UW-Madison.

On Feb. 2, the groundhog saw his shadow and I was on a train bound for Ft. Leonard Wood.

And heading into the Reserves, I was able to tell possible future employers that I would be available for work no later than Sept. 1, barring a call-up of my unit. After several interviews, I locked up my first full-time newspaper job at the Rockford, IL, Morning Star and Register-Republic and left for basic training knowing my future was likely assured. Six months later, I was working in Rockford.

I would never have guessed it, but my time at Fort Leonard Wood was actually interesting and fulfilling - after the first couple of weeks of basic. My then-future wife, Judy, said she thought about ending our engagement after my first couple of whining letters about how tough basic was and how I might not make it.

Of course, I did make it. In fact, I came out of the six weeks of basic in the best shape of my life. And, being the only enlisted man in my company with a college degree, the officers put me into some leadership positions that gave me a lot of newfound confidence. The other recruits began calling this 24-year-old "Pop," and coming to me for advice and solace. I remained at Leonard Wood for combat engineer school, which turned out to be breeze after my CO found out I typed at 90 words a minute and knew how to write a report. I also made some good friends along the way, so the experience turned out to be a good one.

During my 5 ½ years of inactive duty, my unit almost got called up for service in Vietnam twice. But, as luck would have it, other units got the call and I finished out my Reserve obligation without any more active duty.

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Jeff Williams - I was drafted in 1960 right after finishing J-school at U of Oregon. I was put in an experimental battle group where all 1500 of us trained one year together at Fort Riley Kansas and then put on a troop ship to South Korea and finally trucked to a base just below the DMZ. We arrived in July 1961, just a couple months after General Park Chung Hee had staged a coup and taken over the government.

Although I had been trained as a gunner on a jeep-mounted 106mm recoilless rifle, the powers that be had me start a newspaper for the battle group. About the same time, Park Chung Hee came to visit our unit. Big parade formed, naturally. Park and some American generals were on a low stage that had been built just for the show. I noticed that Park was sitting alone and apart from the US officers, so I clambered up there and approached him. His interpreter appeared. I introduced myself and asked an inane introductory question.

Park politely was responding when a bird colonel suddenly materialized beside me, bowing first to Park and then turning his beet red apoplectic face to me. "Get off this stage NOW, private!" Yessir. The following day I was back patrolling the countryside on the jeep-mounted 106.

Moreno named new Springfield, Illinois, statehouse correspondent

CHICAGO (AP) - Ivan Moreno, a political reporter for the Associated Press in Colorado, has been named the AP's supervisory correspondent at the Illinois statehouse in Springfield.

Moreno has worked for the AP for eight years, the last five covering the Colorado statehouse in Denver. His standout work there includes investigations into gun control legislation and voter fraud claims. He also covered the 2014 Colorado governor's race.

Before joining the AP, Moreno worked for the Rocky Mountain News. He has a journalism degree from Metropolitan State University of Denver and was a Kiplinger Social Media Reporting Fellow at Ohio State University.

In Springfield, Moreno will team with AP Political Writer John O'Connor, who has worked as an investigative reporter in the bureau for 17 years.

Moreno will take up his new post in December.



By Brian Carovillano

San Francisco reporter **Ellen Knickmeyer** was reporting on a lawsuit by farmers with tainted water wells when she spotted a reference to a request by California Gov. Jerry Brown. He wanted state regulators to research his family's ranch for possible oil and gas drilling and mining resources.

That seemed odd to Knickmeyer, and she went back to state officials and filed a state Public Records Act request. That yielded emails between state officials as well as what was provided to the governor - an assessment of oil and mining potential, records of past oil and gas drilling around his ranch and a pdf map specially prepared for the governor and labeled JB-Ranch.

What she found surprised her: Brown personally asked for the assessment from the state's top oil and gas official, whom the governor had appointed nine days earlier. That official tasked other regulators with pulling together a comprehensive report for Brown by the next day. Although they concluded there was little potential for mining and oil drilling on Brown's 2,700-acre ranch, industry experts said they had never heard of state workers doing such work for a private landowner. The request also did not square with Brown's image as a clean energy crusader.

Brown's office would not speak to Knickmeyer and instead sent her to state

regulators who said the governor's request was legal, proper and handled no differently than inquiries from the public. Knickmeyer then pressed for the names of anyone who received similar information. She got no response, and filed a second records request.

Knickmeyer's scoop resonated. It showed Brown mixing his private life as a wealthy landowner with his official duties. The [story](#) was on the front page of 15 California newspapers, including the San Francisco Chronicle and San Jose Mercury News. It was widely used online, including by the New York Times and Washington Post, and it prompted a Los Angeles Times editorial that said: "It's inappropriate for the governor to call the head of an agency for help with personal business, especially someone he had just installed in the job nine days before."

For her eagle eye, persistence and thorough reporting, Knickmeyer wins this week's \$300 Best of the States prize.

Shared by Valerie Komor.

Welcome to Connecting



Jon Elswick ([Email](#))

A.L. "Butch" Alford ([Email](#))

Stories of interest

Media graveyard: Daily newspapers down nearly 80%, hard news

'in danger' (Washington Examiner)

Hard news faces the same kind of extinction as newspapers and magazines, the result of a dramatic death spiral of reporting jobs and ads and the rise of the type of opinion journalism popular two and three centuries ago, according to a new report and analysis.

"Hard news is in danger," said a new report from the Brookings Institution.

The report detailed a fall-off in advertising revenues and employment and raised the question that without editorial employees filtering the news, credibility will be undermined.

[Click here](#) to read more. Shared by Paul Shane.

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Introducing Notify, a Notifications App from Facebook

Notifications are becoming one of the primary ways people first learn about things wherever they are. Today we are introducing Notify, a new app from Facebook that delivers timely notifications about the things that matter to you, from the sources you love, all in one place.

Everyone has different interests, so whether you're into sports, celebrities, news, movies, music or shopping, Notify makes it easy to find notifications you're into with a broad selection of great "stations" across a variety of categories. Some examples of stations include:

[Click here](#) to read more.

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Why journalists have the right to cover the University of Missouri protests (Columbia Journalism Review)

PAY HEED, ALL WHO INTERFERE with Tim Tai's newsgathering: He will photo-splain the First Amendment to you. Tai is the student journalist seen in [the viral video](#) trying to take pictures of the #ConcernedStudent1950 assembly Monday at Mizzou, soon after the university system's president resigned at the activists' behest.

Hundreds of students, faculty, and staff gathered on the [Carnahan Quadrangle](#) to support the 1950 group, whose name is a nod to the year black students were first allowed on Mizzou's campus. The [president's](#) resignation—and later the chancellor's—followed weeks of unrest at the state's flagship university. One grad student declared a hunger strike, and the football team refused to compete as long as the president kept his job, all while the 1950 members camped out in tents on campus. The protests were sparked by anger that administrators had not acted more quickly to address [recent expressions](#) of racism directed at black students.

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

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Sahar Speaks aims to open doors for female reporters from

Afghanistan (Nieman)



22 people killed at a [Doctors Without Borders hospital](#) in Kunduz, Afghanistan, following a U.S. air strike. A 19-year-old [woman stoned to death](#) in a Taliban-controlled village in central Afghanistan. These stories burst into public consciousness when the news first breaks, then recede after a few days. Moreover, these stories are rarely, if ever, covered by female Afghan journalists, and strict social limitations on interaction between men and women still exist in many parts of the country, leaving a gaping hole in news coverage of the real experiences of women there.

A new initiative called [Sahar Speaks](#), founded by longtime foreign correspondent [Amie Ferris-Rotman](#), aims to offer cohorts of female Afghan reporters structured media training, mentoring by other female journalists (volunteers who are experienced foreign correspondents), and ultimately, [publication of their work in The Huffington Post](#).

[Click here](#) to read more.

There's a good reason protesters at the University of Missouri

didn't want the media around (Washington Post)

Video of a confrontation between a news photographer and protesters at the University of Missouri on Monday led to a dispute between journalists and the activists' sympathizers beyond the campus walls. In response to a series of racial issues at the university, a circle of arm-linked students sought to designate a "safe space" around an encampment on the campus quad. When they blocked journalist Tim Tai from photographing the encampment, reporters complained that media were denied access to a public space.

Certainly, Tai - like any journalist - had a legal right to enter the space, given that it was in a public area. But that shouldn't be the end of this story. We in the media have something important to learn from this unfortunate exchange. The protesters had a legitimate gripe: The black community distrusts the news media because it has failed to cover black pain fairly.

As a journalist, I understand how frustrating it is to be denied access to a person or place that's essential to my story. I [appeared with other journalists](#) on local media in New York City to discuss our frustration over Mayor Bill de Blasio's sometimes standoffish attitude towards the press. He is a public figure whose salary is paid with tax dollars. He is obligated to be accessible to us.

[Click here](#) to read more.

Today in History - November 13, 2015

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Nov. 13, the 317th day of 2015. There are 48 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 13, 1985, some 23,000 residents of Armero, Colombia, died when a volcanic mudslide buried the city.

On this date:

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

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

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

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

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

In 1940, the Walt Disney film "Fantasia," featuring animated segments set to classical music, had its world premiere in New York.

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

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

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

In 1974, Karen Silkwood, a 28-year-old technician and union activist at the Kerr-

McGee Cimarron plutonium plant near Crescent, Oklahoma, died in a car crash while on her way to meet a reporter.

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

In 1995, seven people, including five Americans, were killed when a bomb exploded at a military training facility in Riyadh, [Saudi Arabia](#).

Ten years ago: Secretary of State [Condoleezza Rice](#), in Jerusalem, strongly rebuked Iran's leadership, saying "no civilized nation" can call for the annihilation of another - a reference to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's (mahk-MOOD' ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zhadhz) remark that Israel should be "wiped off the map." An Iraqi woman arrested by Jordanian authorities confessed on television to trying to blow herself up with her husband in one of the three Nov. 9 suicide attacks in Amman. American Indian historian and activist Vine Deloria Jr. died at age 72.

Five years ago: Pro-democracy hero Aung San Suu Kyi (soo chee) walked free in Myanmar after more than seven years under house arrest. Former White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel officially announced his ultimately successful candidacy for mayor of Chicago.

One year ago: The European Space Agency published the first images taken from the surface of a comet; the photos sent back to Earth showed a rocky surface, with one of the lander's three feet in the corner of the frame. Clayton Kershaw became the first pitcher to win the National League MVP award since Bob Gibson in 1968; Los Angeles Angels' outfielder Mike Trout was a unanimous pick for the AL MVP.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Madeleine Sherwood is 93. Journalist-author Peter Arnett is 81. Producer-director Garry Marshall is 81. Actor Jimmy Hawkins is 74. Country singer-songwriter Ray Wylie Hubbard is 69. Actor Joe Mantegna is 68. Actress Sheila Frazier is 67. Actress Frances Conroy is 62. Musician Andrew Ranken (The Pogues) is 62. Actress Tracy Scoggins is 62. Actor Chris Noth (nonth) is 61. Actress-comedian [Whoopi Goldberg](#) is 60. Actor Rex Linn is 59. Actress Caroline Goodall is 56. Actor Neil Flynn is 55. Former NFL quarterback and College Football Hall of Famer Vinny Testaverde is 52. Rock musician Walter Kibby (Fishbone) is 51. Comedian Jimmy Kimmel is 48. Actor Steve Zahn is 48. Actor Gerard Butler is 46. Writer-activist Ayaan Hirsi Ali is 46. Actor Jordan Bridges is 42. Actress Aisha Hinds is 40. Rock musician Nikolai Fraiture is 37. NBA All-Star Metta World Peace (formerly Ron Artest) is 36. Actress Monique Coleman is 35. Actor Rahul Kohli (TV: "iZombie") is 30.

Thought for Today: "I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library." - Jorge Luis Borges, Argentine author (1899-1986).

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