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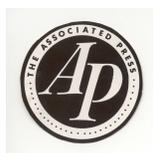
# Connecting - December 26, 2015

1 message

**Paul Stevens** <stevenspl@live.com>  
Reply-To: stevenspl@live.com  
To: pjshane@gmail.com

Sat, Dec 26, 2015 at 9:50 AM

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# Connecting

December 26, 2015

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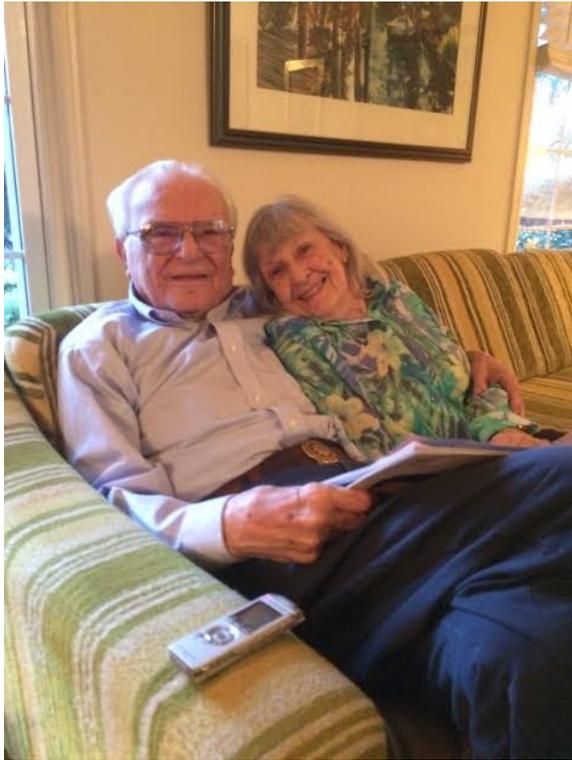
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Colleagues,

Good Saturday morning!

Please join me in wishing a happy 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday today to **Fred Hoffman**, the AP's longtime military writer during the Vietnam War and its aftermath.



Our Connecting colleague **Chris Connell** lives closeby to Fred and his wife Norma (at left) in Alexandria, Virginia, and sat down with him for an interview that leads today's issue.

Chris reports that when he called Fred to arrange the interview, Fred started recapping his career and adventures even before he told him what he was calling about - mentioning that he began working for AP "on the day Harry Truman was inaugurated" - and that he decided to retire almost on the spot in 1984 after finding a snippy note from a supervisor during his once-a-week drop by the bureau to pick up the mail.

Fred and Norma's daughter **Lisa Hoffman** is a new member of Connecting and if you would like to relay a birthday wish to Fred, you can do so by sending an email to Lisa at - [lisahoffman.editor@gmail.com](mailto:lisahoffman.editor@gmail.com) Or you can drop a postal note to an address at the end of Chris' story.

Hope your Christmas was a great one.

Paul

## At 93 years young, Fred Hoffman reflects on a fascinating AP career



*Photo by Chris Connell*

**By CHRIS CONNELL ([Email](#))**

During the Vietnam War longtime AP Military Writer Fred Hoffman did four stints reporting from the war-torn country and its troubled neighbors in Southeast Asia. An investigative series he coauthored with Hugh Mulligan on rampant corruption was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 1966. In a conflict that claimed the lives of more than five dozen journalists, including six from the AP, Hoffman followed one rule: get as close to the action as possible, but don't spend the night in the field, especially with South Vietnamese

troops "because the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese tended to attack at dawn." His resolve was tested once when he ventured out to the headquarters of the Army 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division's Ironhorse brigade on the famed Michelin rubber plantation. "I bummed a ride on a transport plane, sitting alone in the back with these 55-gallon drums. On the way in we started to take fire. You could see the tracers doing by. Suddenly it dawned on me that this was high octane aviation fuel. One hot round and that was it. I was very lucky," he recalled. He spent the day reporting and then, as the sun was going down, returned to the air strip and looked for the first aircraft headed south. "A small supply plane came in carrying ammunition. I said, 'Can I fly back to Saigon with you?' and he said, 'Yeah, if you help me unload.' He never turned off the engine. I helped him unload cases of grenades and we got out of there before full darkness. That was the closest I came to violating the Hoffman Rule not to spend the night out there in the boondocks."

Fred was sitting in the living room of his Alexandria, Virginia, home, spinning tales a few days after attending the funeral of another AP legend, Barry Schweid, and a week before Boxing Day and Fred's 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The poignant graveside service for Barry drew scores of mourners and when the last words were spoken, many pressed forward not only to console Barry's soulmate, Nina Graybill, but to clasp the firm hand of Hoffman, instantly recognizable across the decades with that shock of white hair, square jaw and sharp wit, a cane the only recognizable concession to age. Most had not laid eyes on Fred since he retired from AP in 1984, or perhaps during the next five years when he served as deputy assistant secretary for public affairs - the No. 2 guy - under Defense Secretaries Caspar Weinberger, Frank Carlucci and Dick Cheney.

Fred has always relished a reputation for being crusty - daughter Lisa Hoffman says he "is as curmudgeonly as ever. Actually, I think he was born a curmudgeon" - and the outpouring of attention and affection from old friends took him by surprise. But it took little prompting to get Fred to recount the story of his life and career, which began in Boston, where his father, a paperhanger, struggled during the Depression and his mother cashed in a \$300 life insurance policy so he could enroll in the journalism school at Boston University. An Army Reservist, he was called up in the middle of his junior year and sent to the backwaters of Georgia for combat infantry training, where he came down with a serious illness that mystified the medics. "They didn't have the doctors or beds to spend on somebody like me, so they discharged me in '43 on disability. At the time I was very uncomfortable. I was physically ill and also it was not a time to be in your 20s and wearing civilian clothes."

"But it was a break. So many people in the trade were away at war, there were openings that would not have been there had I come out in normal times. So I went to work as a go-

fer at UP [United Press] for \$18.25 (a week), and learned the craft in what Harrison Salisbury called the Henry Minor School of Journalism. Minor was the bureau chief in Boston and a superb wire service writer and al-around newsman." After 18 months, it was on to Washington with his bride Norma to work for a small, independent news agency, which in turn led to a job as a news editor for WWDC radio station. "I didn't feel comfortable. I wanted to get back into wire service work, where I felt at home," he said.



*Farewell party in Pentagon press room when Fred was heading off for Vietnam in 1966.*

"I began going to the AP bureau and lobbying for a job there. They didn't exactly brush me off, but AP didn't hire in Washington. They rewarded promising staffers around the country by bringing them to Washington. But I kept coming and making a bit of a nuisance of myself" until he landed a spot in 1949 on the Washington city wire, which marketed a stripped down version of the full AP report along with a calendar of upcoming news conferences and other events. "It was about as far down as you could get, but it was a toe in the door, so I took a pay cut and went to work," said Hoffman. "I was off in a corner, editing the city wire, and I began beating on Bennett Wolfe, a very friendly and fatherly guy who was head of AP's very good regional staff." It took years, but Hoffman eventually snagged a regional plum, covering the influential Ohio delegation. "This was the era of Bob Taft, Mr. Republican. We had 48 papers in Ohio and I got several good national stories because my members were so high up. I had a great time those years."

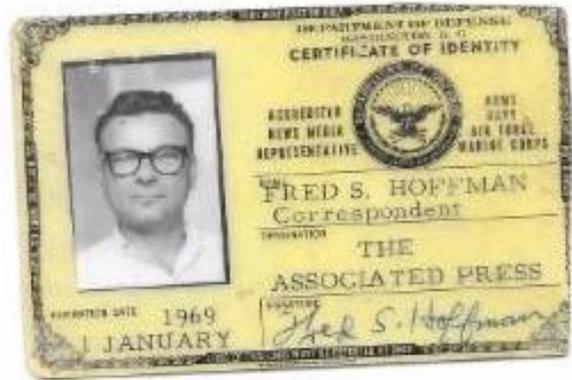
His next stop was on the night desk as a rewrite man under the tutelage of the great Don Sanders. Hoffman was eager to get back to reporting and eventually got the opportunity to cover the Pentagon in 1961 as the understudy to veteran military writer Elton Fay, nearing the end of a 42-year AP career that started in Albany covering then-Gov. Franklin Roosevelt. Fay made a habit, as Fred later did, of coming in to the bureau only once a week to pick up mail. "He'd stroll in on Saturday afternoon. Usually the lid was on at the Pentagon and the White House and we would chat. When the second slot at the Pentagon opened up, Elton asked if I was interested. I grabbed at it."

It was the height of the Cold War and the space race with the Soviet Union. The Berlin Wall, the Bay of Pigs and Cuban missile crises all posed enormous challenges for John F. Kennedy, the young, war hero president whose mettle Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev was eager to test. Ngo Dinh Diem, the president of South Vietnam, was looking to Washington for help in quelling the communist insurgency there. "Jack and Bobby Kennedy were both enamored of the idea that using the Special Forces. I hear echoes of it now when this president says he's sending 50 Special Ops guys to Syria and Iraq to train the locals to fight for themselves," said Hoffman.

Hoffman was on a Kennedy trip to visit Camp Lejeune in North Carolina when he got a call from bureau chief Marv Arrowsmith. The White House was sending a high level delegation to Vietnam, Thailand and Laos and Hoffman would be going on the five-person press pool. "I had no passport, nothing, so there was a big scramble. They got me a passport and the following Sunday the mission left for Vietnam, led by Walt Rostow, the president's national security adviser, and Max Taylor, who'd been a wonder-boy general in World War II," he said. Taylor didn't cotton to having reporters so close. "We had one briefing between mainland United States and Hawaii on our way to Vietnam. When we got there, he said, 'You're on your own.' So with the help of the only American reporter in the country at the time, I was able to get around the country chasing Taylor and the others."

Fay more than welcomed the energy the eager Hoffman brought to the beat. "There was no competition between us. He gave me the time and in effect told me to just take off and learn the beat," he said. "That's what I did. I was like a police reporter, roaming around learning who was doing what and who was active on what issue. Contrary to legend, the Pentagon was not a closed off building by any means. Except for the National Military Command Center and some of the more arcane areas involving research, it was open. I took advantage of that." Hoffman soon was breaking stories with sources he cultivated at all levels.

"I always felt the defense beat was the best reporter's beat in town because it was the most challenging. On Capitol Hill you had 535 people running after you to get your attention, and in the Pentagon you had everybody running the other way," he said. The military and civilian leaders would read Hoffman's reporting on the city wire, in newspapers and in the Pentagon's own Yellow Bird, a daily digest of news clippings, and "as you demonstrated you'd at least be fair, they would open up - perhaps." He found connections, too, at the Strategic Air Command in Omaha, Nebraska, the Atlantic Fleet in Norfolk, Virginia, and other key outposts that would serve him in good stead in times of crisis.



"My reach was pretty far and extensive. If I got a call from the desk late at night, I'd have to judge what was worth pursuing then and what was worth waiting until the next cycle in the morning. I had to be careful how often I would rouse valuable sources out of bed for something less than an end-of-the-earth-kind of situation," he said.

During the Yom Kippur War in 1973, he scored perhaps his biggest scoop and most satisfying story, breaking the news of how President Richard Nixon had ordered a worldwide military alert in a high stakes chess match with the Soviets as the Israelis were on the verge of wiping out Egypt's retreating Third Army. Fred tells that story himself in the accompanying sidebar.

An earlier high point was being in the pool when Alan Shepherd was shot into space in 1961 and dictating a running description of the launch while Howard Benedict watched from the "bureau" through binoculars from a nearby motel and wrote the leads. When Fred heard a thick German accent beside him, he looked around and realized he was shoulder to shoulder with Wernher von Braun.

Fred was renowned not only for his sources, but a preternatural ability to dictate smooth, richly detailed stories under deadline pressure. "I used to dictate most of my stories. I might write out the lean but from there on I would dictate," he said. "I found writing on a typewriter too consuming so I composed in my head."

The job was "all-encompassing. It was a news-rich beat. Frequently I worked until 10 or 11 at night and came into the Pentagon on Saturday and Sunday. My wife was very, very tolerant." Years later, when then-bureau chief Walter Mears told Fred he was being named a special writer, he told Mears, "I know why you're doing this. You don't pay special writers overtime."

By the time the Reagan administration rolled around, Fred, with 35 years of service, began thinking about kicking back. When he found a note of criticism from a supervisor in his mailbox one day in 1984, that clinched it. After stewing all weekend over a response, he made up his mind. "I went into the bureau chief and said, 'Hear this. I'm retiring the end of the week.' He said, 'You can't!' I said, 'Yes, I can, and I am and I will.' I had warned them several years



**Fred, left, with assistant secretary of defense Henry Catto Jr. in 1982.**

earlier that AP had to start training someone to follow me. This was not the kind of a beat that you can just walk in and immediately (handle). You had to learn story by story where the decisions were made, who made them and how the system worked."

Still shy of 62, Fred had no backup plan, but when he told the assistant secretary of defense, Michael Burch, "I was going to hang it up, he immediately said, 'Would you be interested in going to work for us?' I thought about it for a millisecond and said, 'Sure.'" He finished work at AP on a Friday and started the new job on Monday. Burch, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, told Hoffman later that when he sought Weinberger's blessing, the defense secretary replied, 'Well, it's your call, but can we trust him?' Weinberger soon did, and Hoffman later discovered the defense secretary had once written a column for a San Francisco newspaper and enjoyed the company of journalists.

When Norma joined the conversation, Fred switched to another war story: the triumphant battle his pixyish wife waged to stop Fairfax County from building a four-lane highway through parkland that the federal government had deeded to the county. "Norma, all five feet of her, organized the opposition. After 15 years of battling, she turned back the county and prevented the road from going through." Today the Nature Center at popular Huntley Meadows Park bears Norma Hoffman's name and the couple volunteers there one morning a week.

Lisa Hoffman, a veteran journalist who worked for Miami Herald, Dallas Times Herald, Cincinnati Post and Scripps Howard News Service and now is a freelance writer and editor, said her parents' "devotion to each other is breathtaking."

The couple met in downtown Boston after Fred heard a voice call out his name. "I looked around and saw this attractive girl, smiling at me. I went over. Turned out I'd dated her friend's older sister. So we made a date and went from there. Married at the very end of the war."

"I'm very proud of this guy. A wonderful fellow," Norma said before lobbing a sole reservation. "I was a professional dancer. He didn't dance." But she added, "It was fascinating living with this guy. He's got a lot of love for his family, particularly his wife, and he shows it. I'm 90 and still dancing."

Fred got the last word. "In a manner of speaking," he said with a smile.

Fred doesn't use computers or email ("The furthest advance we have gotten is the manual typewriter. I didn't even get as far as the high-speed typewriter.") but the Hoffmans' address is 6915 Lodestone Court, Alexandria, VA 22306 and he can be reached by phone at [\(703\) 765-7498](tel:7037657498)

## ***In his words:***

***Lips were sealed when the U.S. went to DEFCON 3 during the Yom Kippur War - until the AP's Hoffman found out why***

**By FRED HOFFMAN**

Of all the thousands of stories I wrote over the years, the one I got the most satisfaction

from was the hardest I ever had to develop.

It was at the very end of the 1973 Middle East War - the Yom Kippur War -- There I had to go way up because very few people were knowledgeable. The Israelis had crossed the Suez Canal and surrounded the Egyptian Third Army and were in the process of destroying it. That much was visible. But things were going on in the background that weren't visible and were very, very touchy. At that time Egypt was a client of the Soviet Union.

About 1 a.m. I got a call from the desk. We were getting messages from bureaus in places like the Strategic Air Command and the headquarters of the Atlantic. They were hearing that the military people in their area were being called in from home. Now, I knew that SAC would occasionally pull a no-notice exercise to see if anybody was awake. But then as I began hearing from the bureau there were more and more of these calls, there was a pattern. So I said, this one I have to get on the horn.

I began calling around, first trying some of my more valuable sources in the Washington area, people who'd been very frank with me in situations like the Cuban missile crisis. One went like this: 'I'm getting these messages. What's going on?' 'Can't tell you.' 'What do you mean you can't tell me?' I thought about the world at large. I said, 'Does this involve the Middle East?' 'Yeah, I can tell you that much. It's in the Middle East.' 'Well, what's happening? We're hearing that people are begin called from home to go on duty.' 'Sorry. Can't tell you.' These were people I had dealt with for years. By that time I had been in the building for 12 years. They were very apologetic. 'We can't.'

But I was able to piece together a story that there was a worldwide military alert because it was happening in Europe and it was happening in the Far East. I was able to confirm the alerts, but not the reason for the alerts. I couldn't get that closing element. So I put out a piece saying there was a worldwide alert, all services. I forget how I worded it but I managed to relate it to the Middle East situation and then I went into some detail on what I could get of the visible nature. It was a solid story from what I could glean, but it still lacked the why of it.

Well, by then it was 5 o'clock in the morning and I said, 'You know, this one, I better go to the Pentagon. It's a 24-hour operation. Perhaps I can luck out and come across somebody in the building who'll be able to help me face-to-face.'

The press room was on the E-Ring just down the hall from the National Military Command Center, which was off limits. I came in the Mall entrance. The building was absolutely silent. There was no foot traffic. I walked toward the press room and coming the other way was a four-star general I knew and who knew me. I wouldn't say we had a personal relationship, but we had a working relationship. I said, 'What's going on? This is what I hear. I can't get anybody to tell me what's behind this.' He said, 'Oh, Brezhnev has sent

Nixon a nasty message telling Nixon that the United States should get the Israelis to back off their assault on the Egyptian Third Army and, if they didn't, the Russians, the Soviets, may intervene.'

Nixon ordered this worldwide alert as a signal to the Russians to back off from what they were doing. At the same time Nixon put an order out throughout the government that nobody talks and if they did, their heads were going to roll. He didn't want to put the Russians in an embarrassing position if they backed off.

In those days I had a few, very good contacts in the intelligence community. I contacted some of those and they told me they had picked up signals that the Russians were concentrating airborne troops at seven bases. So I had closed the loop in terms of what was driving all this. I put out a story as soon as I could get all my ducks together. It was still early in the morning and nobody was able to match that story for hours. I had it nailed by myself for hours. The Israelis did ease up on the Third Army -- and Brezhnev did not follow up on his threat.

I didn't get a bonus or anything, but I got a big boot out of it. I got a lot of applause from other reporters who came around.

## Connecting mailbox

### *On the title of journalist*

**Ed Staats** - I was told in the old days that a journalist was a reporter between jobs.

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**Matt Moore** - I always preferred reporter, given it was, to me, redolent, of ink-stained wretches laboring at small- and mid-sized dailies. Of course I aspired to "foreign correspondent" and when I became one, I was over the moon.

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**Robert Weller** - My travels led me to meet with three well-known hostages, Terry (Anderson) of AP, Terry Waite of the Anglican Church, and Tom Sutherland of Colorado State University. I hope I haven't left one out.

With the Christmas music playing it is hard to keep the tears away. Last night I watched the movie, "The Maritians," and boy did it cheer us up. The world coming together to save an astronaut. Merry Christmas. RW

-0-

## ***Kathleen Carroll to appear on Reliable Sources***

**Paul Colford** shares this from CNN's Reliable Sources: We're doing something similar on Sunday's "Reliable Sources," but in an unusual way. We're convening three top editors -- Associated Press senior VP **Kathleen Carroll**, NPR senior VP **Michael Oreskes** and Cosmopolitan editor in chief **Joanna Coles** -- for a frank conversation about the year's reliable and unreliable sources. They'll also talk about the toughest decisions they had to make this year, and share some New Year's Resolutions. *Set your DVR -- Sunday, 11am ET, CNN.*

-0-

**Sibby Christensen** shares the obituary in *The New York Times* on Peggy Say, sister of former AP correspondent Terry Anderson. *Connecting* carried the AP story on her death in Thursday's edition.

## **Peggy Say, Voice for Hostages in Lebanon, Dies at 74**

Peggy Say, who waged a nearly seven-year campaign to keep the world from forgetting about her younger brother Terry A. Anderson, the American hostage held longest by Shiite militiamen in [Lebanon](#), died on Wednesday in Cookeville, Tenn. She was 74.

The cause was complications of lung disease, Mr. Anderson said.

Mr. Anderson, who was the chief Mideast correspondent for The Associated Press, was abducted on March 16, 1985, and held hostage by militiamen with ties to Iran, much of the time chained to furniture in a basement in Beirut. Afterward Ms. Say wrapped the nation in a figurative yellow ribbon of remembrance, making her brother a symbol of what began to seem like a lost cause.

[Click here](#) to read more. Shared by Sibby Christensen.



**By BRIAN CAROVILLANO**

A court decision and corrections department policy change led California to overturn a voter-approved ban on sex offenders living near schools and parks. The change garnered widespread media coverage, but no one followed up on the actual impact - except AP's Sacramento reporter Don Thompson.

Thompson pestered officials for months, from the governor's office on down, to get exclusive access to data on how many offenders are still held to the housing restrictions, how many are now free to live where they please, and the effect on offenders who previously were transient because they could find no housing that met the state's strict law.

Officials endlessly delayed the accounting, which was first promised in mid-summer and finally delivered four months late. The state eventually turned over the figures only after the AP said it planned to run a story saying that officials could not say how many offenders still faced restrictions.

Once Thompson had the data, there were more questions, including why the number of offenders without restrictions was so much higher than officials had projected. This led to their acknowledgement for the first time that the housing ban no longer was being applied, even to some offenders whose crimes involved children.

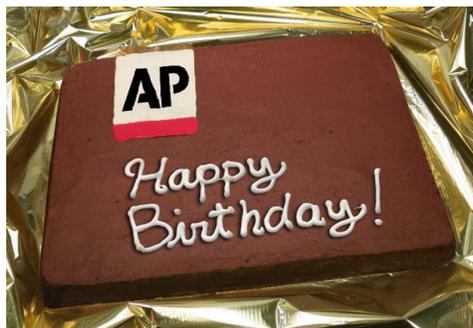
The results were startling: Three-quarters of paroled sex offenders now face no housing restrictions, a much higher rate than officials previously projected following the court ruling. In addition to the [story](#), the AP provided photographs and a county-by-county breakdown that allowed members to [localize](#) the story.

The story was prominently used by members across California, including the Sacramento Bee, San Jose Mercury News, Orange County Register and Bakersfield Now, as well as by Fox News, ABC News, U.S. News and World Report, the Las Vegas Sun and many others. It also had a policy impact, with State Sen. Sharon Runner saying she plans to introduce a law to reinstate the restrictions.

For his relentless pursuit of the detailed impact of a major policy change, Thompson wins this week's \$300 prize.

Shared by Valerie Komor

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Darrell Christian ([Email](#))

Tom Cohen - ([Email](#))

Greg Halling ([Email](#))

## Welcome to Connecting



Melissa Jordan ([Email](#))

Shirley Ragsdale ([Email](#))

## Stories of interest

***Dave Barry's Year in Review: The sad thing is, we're not making this up!*** (Washington Post)

By **DAVE BARRY**

Sometimes we are accused - believe it or not - of being overly negative in our annual Year in Review. Critics say we ignore the many positive events in a given year and focus instead on the stupid, the tragic, the evil, the disgusting, the Kardashians.

Okay, critics: We have heard you. This year, instead of dwelling on the negatives, we're going to start our annual review with a List of the Top Ten Good Things That Happened in 2015. Ready? Here we go:

1. We didn't hear that much about Honey Boo Boo.

[Click here](#) to read more.

## Today in History - December 26, 2015



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Saturday, Dec. 26, the 360th day of 2015. There are five days left in the year. The

seven-day African-American holiday Kwanzaa begins today. This is Boxing Day.

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

On Dec. 26, 1799, former President George Washington was eulogized by Col. Henry Lee as "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

### **On this date:**

In 1865, James H. Nason of Franklin, Massachusetts, received a patent for "an improved coffee percolator."

In 1908, Jack Johnson became the first African-American boxer to win the world heavyweight championship as he defeated Canadian Tommy Burns in Sydney, Australia.

In 1944, during the World War II Battle of the Bulge, the embattled U.S. 101st Airborne Division in Bastogne, Belgium, was relieved by units of the 4th Armored Division. Tennessee Williams' play "The Glass Menagerie" was first performed at the Civic Theatre in Chicago.

In 1966, Kwanzaa was first celebrated.

In 1972, the 33rd president of the United States, Harry S. Truman, died in Kansas City, Missouri, at age 88.

In 1975, the Soviet Union inaugurated the world's first supersonic transport service with a flight of its Tupolev-144 airliner from Moscow to Alma-Ata (AHL'-muh AH'-tah).

In 1980, Iranian television footage was broadcast in the United States, showing a dozen of the American hostages sending messages to their families.

In 1985, Ford Motor Company began selling its Taurus and Sable sedans and station wagons.

In 1990, Nancy Cruzan, the young woman in an irreversible vegetative state whose case led to a U.S. Supreme Court decision on the right to die, died at a Missouri hospital.

In 2000, Michael McDermott, an employee at an Internet firm in Wakefield, Massachusetts, shot and killed seven co-workers. (McDermott was later convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole.) Veteran stage and screen actor Jason Robards died in Bridgeport, Connecticut, at age 78.

In 2004, more than 230,000 people, mostly in southern Asia, were killed by a 100-foot-high tsunami triggered by a 9.1-magnitude earthquake beneath the Indian Ocean.

In 2006, former President Gerald R. Ford died in Rancho Mirage, California, at age 93.

Ten years ago: Survivors wept and prayed beside mass graves and at beachside memorials in Indonesia, marking one year since earthquake-churned walls of water crashed ashore in a dozen nations, sweeping away hundreds of thousands of lives. "Monday Night Football" ended an unprecedented 36-year run on ABC-TV with a lackluster game, a 31-21 New England Patriots victory over the New York Jets. (The series switched to ESPN the following season.) Australia's wealthiest man, media mogul Kerry Packer, died in Sydney at age 68.

Five years ago: A powerful East Coast blizzard stranded thousands of travelers and dumped more than a foot of snow in some areas. Salvador Jorge Blanco, 84, a former president of the [Dominican Republic](#), died in Santo Domingo. Soul singer-songwriter Teena Marie, 54, died in Pasadena, California.

One year ago: Mourners gathered to mark the 10th anniversary of the Indian Ocean tsunami. Russia identified NATO as the nation's No. 1 military threat under a new military doctrine signed by President [Vladimir Putin](#). James B. Edwards, South Carolina's first Republican governor since Reconstruction and later energy secretary for two years in the Reagan administration, died at age 87.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Donald Moffat is 85. Actor Carroll Spinney (Big Bird on TV's "Sesame Street") is 82. Rhythm-and-blues singer Abdul "Duke" Fakir (The Four Tops) is 80. Record producer Phil Spector is 76. "America's Most Wanted" host John Walsh is 70. Country musician Bob Carpenter (The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) is 69. Funk musician George Porter Jr. (The Meters) is 68. Baseball Hall of Fame catcher Carlton Fisk is 68. Retired MLB All-Star Chris Chambliss is 67. Baseball Hall of Famer Ozzie Smith is 61. Former Sen. [Evan Bayh](#), D-Ind., is 60. Humorist David Sedaris is 59. Rock musician James Kottak (The Scorpions) is 53. Country musician Brian Westrum (Sons of the Desert) is 53. Rock musician Lars Ulrich (Metallica) is 52. Actress Nadia Dajani is 50. Rock musician J is 48. Country singer Audrey Wiggins is 48. Rock musician Peter Klett (Candlebox) is 46. Rock singer James Mercer (The Shins; Flake) is 45. Actor-singer Jared Leto is 44. Actress Kendra C. Johnson (TV: "Love Thy Neighbor") is 39. Rock singer Chris Daughtry is 36. Actress Beth Behrs is 30. Actor Kit Harington (TV: "Game of Thrones") is 29. Actress Eden Sher is 24. Pop singer Jade Thirlwall (Little Mix Actor) is 23. Actor Zach Mills is 20.

***Thought for Today: "Little progress can be made by merely attempting to repress what is evil. Our great hope lies in developing what is good." - President Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933).***

## 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!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.
- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.
- **"A silly mistake that you make"**- a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.
- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?
- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.
- **Life after AP** for those of you who have moved on to another job or profession.
- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

**Paul Stevens**  
**Editor**  
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