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Paul Shane <pjshane@gmail.com>

Connecting - February 18, 2016

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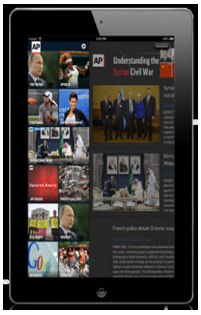
Connecting

February 18, 2016

Click here for sound of the Teletype



Top AP news
Top AP photos
AP World

AP books
Connecting Archive
AP Essentials *(Purchases benefit The AP Emergency Relief Fund)*

Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning!

There's much more to each day's issue of Connecting than what follows this Good Morning salutation. Take a look at the links in the masthead above that bring you:

Top News - the very latest news gathered worldwide by The Associated Press.

Top Photos - the top photos of the day that go with those stories.

AP World - the latest issue that is published for the staff of the AP and provided to retirees exclusively via Connecting.

AP Books - a growing area of books authored by AP journalists past and present.

Connecting Archive - a repository of past Connecting issues dating back to June 2003 and maintained by your colleague Paul Shane.

And the latest link:

AP Essentials - once known as the Company Store, it contains AP-branded items such as shirts, umbrellas, even AP Reporter's Notebooks. Net proceeds from sales are donated to the AP Emergency Relief Fund; by shopping at AP Essentials, you're contributing to the Fund.

And, of course, don't forget to click the printer link when you need a dose of Teletype sound nostalgia.

Paul

Margaret Scherf, former AP Washington editor, dies at 75

Sally Jacobsen - It's with great sadness that I'm writing to tell you that Margaret Scherf, who was a longtime editor in the Washington bureau, passed away on Monday in Springfield, Ill.

Margaret had retired to Springfield several years ago.

Margaret was a wonderful editor who loved the Washington bureau and the many friends and colleagues she worked with over the years.

She had a terrific sense of humor that we all enjoyed so much.

She was a very dear friend who visited me and my family numerous times when we lived overseas.

She will be very much missed.

Her brother, Jim Scherf, is making funeral arrangements in Springfield. Connecting will bring more detail as it is known.

A Step Back in Time...

45 years at AP with Peter Ficken

In the same year that Disney World opened, cigarette ads were banned on TV and the first floppy discs were sold, Peter Ficken joined The Associated Press. He started on February 18 1971, making today his 45 year anniversary. When he first joined, he was based at the Farringdon Street office, before moving to Norwich Street and then finally The Interchange.

"We didn't have computers when I first started working at AP, it was just banks of teleprinters," Peter told us. "As an attendant, I worked within a team minding the devices and printing off all of the incoming copy - for example news bulletins from other bureaus - to pass over to the operators. They would then punch the copy back in and send on to the next bureau."

Peter at the 2015 AP Christmas party with Stella Dixon and Elaine Duddy.

A momentous moment for Peter while working as a printer attendant was when Harold Wilson resigned in 1976. Peter was on shift when news of the resignation came through and he was quick to print off the relevant copy from the Domestic British News Agency and get it passed on. AP was one of the first with that story and Peter was commended for his part in it.

Being an original East Londoner, Peter has enjoyed being based in different parts of the City. The Farringdon Street office - where Peter first started - was well known for flooding. One of London's lost rivers, the River Fleet,

used to run below and, when it rained heavily, the water used to find its way in, which always made for interesting times, Peter told us. Weaving under the streets of Camden, Holborn and King's Cross, the River Fleet once openly flowed for four miles from Hampstead Ponds to the more famous Thames.

Peter has many other memories of those offices: "I will always remember when we saw the rehearsal for the Falklands War victory parade in 1982, and all the armoured vehicles came down Farringdon Street. We played a lot of softball when we were based there as well and we had a Dunkin Donuts right nearby that we visited a lot."

AP offices, Farringdon Street, 1961.

It was at Farringdon Street that Peter got to meet Lord Snowdon when he came in for an interview. Later on, when he moved to Norwich Street in the early 80s he also got to meet Ian Paisley. Talking of his Norwich Street days Peter tells us: "Back in those days a lot more journalists were still Fleet Street based and there was a great sense of camaraderie across the industry. AP staff used to go over to the Telegraph offices for dinner and so on."

Computers were introduced at AP in London between 1975-1978 and, Peter remarks, "it was instant change." It was around that time that Peter's role also evolved and shortly afterward, with support from Keith Rockall, he moved across to work in the post room. He has been there ever since and, when he first came to the Interchange in 2008, he took over from the late John Watson to look after all Royal Mail activity - as well as a whole host of other things!

Now, a typical day for Peter starts at about 8:30am when he gets in to distribute the daily newspapers across the building. He then does a walk around to collect any outgoing post from trays across the building, before handling the day's Royal Mail delivery. Mondays are the busiest for this as it includes all the weekend post, but there is always a lot to get through - it all needs to be sorted and then distributed to the relevant recipients. There is then another walk around to get final outgoing post before it is all prepped and updated for collection about 5pm.

It is not all straightforward though as sometimes Peter has to play a game of what he likes to call 'hunt the thimble,' which is when he receives a letter or parcel with no recipient's name on it. He also recalled the time when a live pigeon was sent to the post room in Norwich Street as part of a promotional initiative. Your guess is as good as ours as to where that came from!

When he isn't at AP, Peter - a born and bred Londoner - can usually be found at the Science Museum. His faith is very important to him, and he also likes to take his car out, and reads a lot. Although we don't think it is the cost of stamps he is reading about - he has been quoted as confessing that he has no idea what a first class stamp costs these days!

Click here for a link to this story. Shared by Marcus Eliason.

AP launches virtual reality and 360 video channel in collaboration with AMD

The Associated Press will launch a virtual reality and 360 video channel in collaboration with AMD (NASDAQ:AMD) to feature the news organization's latest advances in immersive journalism.

Virtual reality and 360 video transport users into the middle of the action by enabling them to travel into and explore different environments. AP aims to deliver these rich

news experiences by combining its reporting depth and global reach with AMD's image rendering and graphic technology.

AMD is known for innovation in high-performance computing, graphics and visualization technologies.

"Each new publishing technology reinvents how we experience news, and VR promises the next revolution by immersing us deep in a story," said Paul Cheung, AP's director of interactive and digital news production. "With AMD's collaboration, AP will leverage their expertise in image rendering and graphic technology so that we can enhance and strengthen the VR news experience."

"The global VR ecosystem is set for expansion, and AMD Radeon graphics is set to power the most realistic experiences possible," said Raja Koduri, senior vice president and chief architect, Radeon Technologies Group at AMD. "In collaboration with The Associated Press, we're excited to bring this realism to audiences everywhere, letting them connect with global issues and news in an unprecedented format, bringing emotion and understanding to the human condition."

AP's editorial uses of virtual reality have included a behind-the-scenes 360 look at Worldport, a massive packaging and sorting facility in Louisville, Kentucky, and the first virtual reality report on the migrant camp in Calais, France. The piece was part of an all-formats project, including five days of video, photo packages and short text pieces.

AP will retain complete control over the editorial content presented via its new virtual reality channel, powered by AMD Radeon. The channel can be found atwww.bigstory.ap.org/VR360.

Click here for a link to this story.

And **click here** for a story from Venture Beat, shared by Larry Blasko and Katie Mangan.

Connecting mailbox

In defense of entry-level journalists

Sandy Johnson - The screed "An open letter to journalism students who want jobs" (in Wednesday's Connecting) struck a chord with me. I have to disagree with Cristi Hegranes. I've worked for huge news organizations (AP) and small (CPI) and my current gig at the nonprofit National Press Foundation. I am astonished at the talent level of college students and new graduates who have worked for me over the decades. (David Ho! Kasie Hunt! Jennifer Loven! Ben Leubsdorf! to name just a few) And in my 18 months at NPF, we have been blessed with scores of qualified applicants for every intern opening. We pay our interns, so perhaps that has something to do with the quality. Their talent, initiative, knowledge and skill sets astonish me. And, frankly, give me hope for a news business that has been turned upside down. I don't know HTML, CSS, Microsoft Office, Adobe CS6 Suite, Final Cut Pro -- they do. They're cutting their teeth on journalism -- isn't it our job to teach them our hard-won journalism chops? So bring on the interns: Ji, Beteck, Isbella, Katie and more. You have taught me just as much as I can teach you.

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LBJ and wire printers in the Oval Office

Anne Wheeler, communications director of the LBJ Presidential Library in Austin, Texas, shares with Connecting these photos from the library's photo archives that show President Lyndon Johnson with the AP and UPI teletypes in the Oval Office during his presidency. This in follow to a photo in Wednesday's Connecting.

June 2, 1967: President Lyndon B. Johnson and British Prime Minister Harold Wilson read news as it comes off the ticker. (LBJ Library photo by Yoichi Okamoto)

May 4, 1965: President Lyndon B. Johnson reads wire service ticker and talks on phone as Marvin Watson holds phone console. (LBJ Library photo by Yoichi Okamoto)

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Services for Bill Snead set for February 26

Services have been set for **Bill Snead**, noted photographer for UPI, National Geographic, The Washington Post and several other newspapers including his hometown Lawrence Journal-World. He died at his home in Lawrence, Kansas, on Sunday after a long battle with cancer.

The services will be held on Friday, February 26, 2016, at 11 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church 946 Vermont St. Lawrence KS 66044. The family will greet guests immediately following the service. The family invites friends and out of town guests to join them for refreshments at Ingredient. 947 Massachusetts Ave. Lawrence, at 4 p.m.

His sizable body of work is being donated to the Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas, adding to its collection of images made by more than 30 nationally prominent photojournalists, several of whom were Snead's colleagues and friends.

In lieu of flowers the Family suggests memorials to the KU Endowment Association, P.O. Box 928, Lawrence, Kan., 66044 to fund a photojournalism scholarship in Bill Snead's name or may be sent in care of Warren-McElwain Mortuary, 120 W. 13th Street, Lawrence, Kan., 66044.

Click here for a link to his obituary.

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And more of your memories of unusual printer locations

Bob Haring - Your piece about printers triggered a lot of memories, especially from my days as Tulsa correspondent (1961-64).

Tulsa's two newspapers had a lot of printers. AP also served a number of broadcasters and smaller newspapers. But the only technician was based in Oklahoma City, in those days a drive of two and a half to three hours. So I frequently

got called on for help.

Sometimes it was simply a matter of changing patch cords in the big jack box over my desk, so I could swap a spare printer for one that wasn't working. Other times it was more than that.

Bob Fiveash was chief of communications and he sometimes called to ask me favors, such as taking a spare printer from Tulsa to replace one at a radio station. Now and then that involved driving to another town.

My worst recollection was the time I went to Miami (Oklahoma). The radio station said its printer had quit working.

So I loaded up a spare and made the hour-plus drive to Miami.

I swapped the units, but the replacement still did not work. I checked both units, looked at the terminal box where the AT&T wires connected to the printer. Nothing worked.

Finally, I happened to glance underneath the printer table. The power cord was unplugged. Problem solved.

But I later infuriated a few members who called to say their printer wasn't working when I asked, "Is it plugged in?" Once I asked that and got a response about my failure to take the problem seriously, etc. I just explained that the first step in troubleshooting was to make sure the printer was plugged in.

I got more verbal abuse and then an angry hangup. But when I called an hour or so later to check, another station employee told me the printer was working fine.

Fiveash was a genius. Another time we were all out of spare units in Tulsa and had a printer that wasn't working.

Fiveash had me rebuild the malfunctioning unit, giving me instructions via our teletype tieline. It took a couple of hours but saved AP a lot of money and problems.

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Denny Gale - Although I eventually ended up working for AP for almost 29 years, I didn't know anything about teletypes in my first job. It was 1971, and I was straight out of college when I landed a job at KIJV radio in Huron, S.D. The machine was in a storage closet down the hall from my desk, and one morning it was strangely quiet. I looked at the teletype, and it was just plain dead. I knew enough to call the tech at the AP bureau in Sioux Falls, who dutifully drove to Huron, walked straight into the storage closet, plugged in the subset and drove two hours back to Sioux Falls. Talk about a quick fix.

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Carl Leubsdorf - Re printers in odd places:

John MacCormac, a New York Times correspondent stationed in central Europe, had his printer in the bathroom of his Vienna hotel room. He reputedly got up twice each night to check it. That was how he learned that a revolt had broken out in 1956 in Hungary, which he hastened to cover.

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Steve Graham - The late Washington COC Larry Stephens liked to tell the story of having an order to install a printer at a certain U.S. Government agency and when he took the Extel printer to the designated address, it was an empty field.

As Larry told the story, an unmarked vehicle pulled up behind him and a man got out and came over to him and said. "Thank you. I'll take it from here."

So, it might have gone to the most interesting location of all, but we don't know where.

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Aside from printers...

Michael Rubin - From remarks about Harvey Levin and TMZ, the AP/LA Connecting gang has decided this is "yuckracking," rather than muck racking.

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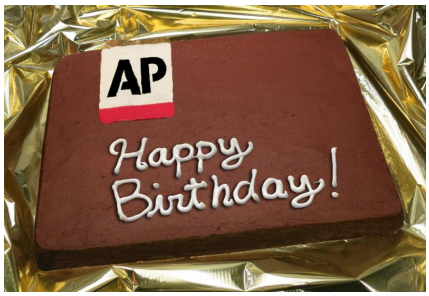
Neal Ulevich - Regarding this image, it's a great mug shot...

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Paul Caluori - pcaluori@ap.org

Welcome to Connecting

Deborah Mesce - dmesce@prb.org

Stories of interest

How BuzzFeed's Jonah Peretti Is Building A 100-Year Media Company (Fast Company)

BuzzFeed publisher Dao Nguyen, Motion Pictures president Ze Frank, and CEO Jonah Peretti keep BuzzFeed weird-and powerful-by never getting too comfortable.

Ask BuzzFeed CEO Jonah Peretti about his influences, and his answer sounds like, well, a BuzzFeed post-one titled "The Three Historical References That Explain BuzzFeed Will Make You Say WTF." Peretti first points to a company that started more than 100 years ago, Paramount Pictures, which owned a film production studio, its own cast of talent, and its own distribution channel in the form of theaters. "That allowed them to adapt and change as the market changed," says Peretti.

Peretti's second fascination is with CNN-how founder Ted Turner ran a 24-hour news operation at a fraction of the cost of what the networks spent, due in part to prescient use of satellite and cable technology.

Click here to read more.

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Newspapers Wither in Canada With Few Billionaires to Save Them (Bloomberg)

It's been a dismal start to the year for Canada's newspapers, and investors see little sign of a turnaround.

Postmedia Network Canada Corp., owner of many of the country's newspapers, announced in January it was merging newsrooms in cities where it has two papers, eliminating dozens of jobs. Torstar Corp., publisher of the country's largest circulation paper, closed its printing plant and fired 300. Rogers Media, a unit of Rogers Communications Inc., fired 200 people. The 149-year-old Guelph Mercury shut down its print edition. Some publishers are even suggesting government support is necessary. And that was just in January.

"We're seeing a further cratering of the daily press," Ken Doctor, an independent media analyst at Santa Cruz, California-based Newsonomics, said by phone."The toll that all these years of losses in print advertising has taken is now deadening the enterprises."

Click here to read more. Shared by Paul Shane.

Today in History - February 18, 2016

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Feb. 18, the 49th day of 2016. There are 317 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 18, 1516, Mary Tudor, the Queen of England who came to be known as "Bloody Mary" for her persecution of Protestants, was born in Greenwich.

On this date:

In 1546, Martin Luther, leader of the Protestant Reformation in Germany, died in Eisleben.
In 1861, Jefferson Davis was sworn in as provisional president of the Confederate States of America in Montgomery, Alabama.
In 1885, Mark Twain's "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" was published in the U.S. for the first time (after being published in Britain and Canada).
In 1913, Mexican President Francisco I. Madero and Vice President Jose Maria Pino Suarez were arrested during a military coup (both were shot to death on Feb. 22).
In 1930, photographic evidence of Pluto (now designated a "dwarf planet") was discovered by Clyde W. Tombaugh at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona.
In 1943, Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of the Chinese leader, addressed members of the Senate and then the House, becoming the first Chinese national to address both houses of the U.S. Congress.
In 1953, "Bwana Devil," the movie that heralded the 3D fad of the 1950s, had its New York opening.
In 1960, the 8th Winter Olympic Games were formally opened in Squaw Valley, California, by Vice President Richard M. Nixon.
In 1970, the "Chicago Seven" defendants were found not guilty of conspiring to incite riots at the 1968 Democratic national convention; five were convicted of violating the Anti-Riot Act of 1968 (those convictions were later reversed).
In 1984, Italy and the Vatican signed an accord under which Roman Catholicism ceased to be the state religion of Italy.
In 1995, the NAACP replaced veteran chairman William Gibson with Myrlie Evers-Williams, the widow of slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers.
In 2001, auto racing star Dale Earnhardt Sr. died in a crash at the Daytona 500; he was 49.

Ten years ago: American Shani Davis won the men's 1,000-meter speedskating in Turin, becoming the first black athlete to win an individual gold medal in Winter Olympic history. A Hamas-dominated Palestinian parliament was sworn in. Militants in Nigeria seized nine foreign oil workers, including three Americans (all were released unharmed). Eight workers at a meat processing plant in Nebraska won a record $365 million Powerball jackpot. Character actor Richard Bright ("The Godfather" movies) was struck and killed by a bus in New York; he was 68.

Five years ago: The United States vetoed a U.N. resolution that would have condemned Israeli settlements as illegal and called for a halt in all settlement building; the 14 other Security Council members voted in favor of the measure.

One year ago: President Barack Obama, hosting a White House summit on countering violent extremism, said Muslims in the U.S. and around the world had a responsibility to fight a misconception that terrorist groups like the Islamic State were speaking for them.

Today's Birthdays: Actor George Kennedy is 91. Former Sen. John Warner, R-Va., is 89. Author Toni Morrison is 85. Movie director Milos (MEE'-lohsh) Forman is 84. Singer Yoko Ono is 83. Singer-songwriter Bobby Hart is 77. Singer Irma Thomas is 75. Singer Herman Santiago (Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers) is 75. Actress Jess Walton is 70. Singer Dennis DeYoung is 69. Actress Sinead Cusack is 68. Actress Cybill Shepherd is 66. Singer Juice Newton is 64. Singer Randy Crawford is 64. Rock musician Robbie Bachman is 63. Rock musician Larry Rust (Iron Butterfly) is 63. Actor John Travolta is 62. Actor John Pankow is 61. Game show host Vanna White is 59. Actress Jayne Atkinson is 57. Actress Greta Scacchi (SKAH'-kee) is 56. Actor Matt Dillon is 52. Rock musician Tommy Scott (Space) is 52. Rapper Dr. Dre is 51. Actress Molly Ringwald is 48. Actress Sarah Brown is 41. Actor Ike Barinholtz is 39. Actor Kristoffer Polaha is 39. Singer-musician Sean Watkins (Nickel Creek) is 39. Actor Tyrone Burton is 37. Rock-singer musician Regina Spektor is 36. Opera singer Isabel Leonard is 34. Roots rock musician Zac Cockrell (Alabama Shakes) is 28. Actor Shane Lyons is 28. Actress Maiara Walsh is 28.

Thought for Today: "Opinion is that exercise of the human will which helps us to make a decision without information." - John Erskine, American author and educator (1879-1951).

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.

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paulstevens46@gmail.com

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