



Paul Shane <pjshane@gmail.com>

Connecting - December 13, 2017

1 message

Paul Stevens <paulstevens46@gmail.com>
Reply-To: paulstevens46@gmail.com
To: pjshane@gmail.com

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning!

Hanukkah Sameakh! That means Happy Hanukkah in Hebrew and if you are among the millions of people around the world celebrating the start of Hanukkah last night, and continuing through the evening of Dec. 20, we wish you a blessed holiday.

Here's to a great day ahead!

Paul

Fred Hoffman nearing 'ripe old age' of 95 - and he'd love to hear from you



Fred and his wife Norma outside their Virginia home in 2014

Lisa Hoffman (Email) - Connecting continues to be terrific. Hope you never doubt how much your hard work means to your readers. And happy birthday to you!

Speaking of birthdays, my dad (former longtime AP Pentagon reporter Fred Hoffman) will reach the decidedly ripe old age of 95 on Dec. 26. He's still feisty, engaged and doing remarkably well physically. The loss of his beloved Norma in June -- just shy of their 72nd anniversary -- has taken a toll. Still, he's soldiering on.

Lately, we've been reminiscing about his life, especially his AP years and the history he covered: The Mercury 7 space flights. The Cuban Missile Crisis. Vietnam. And

the Kefauver hearings, in the middle of which a Mafia don ominously summoned Fred to his hotel room -- only to praise his coverage as fair.

Lots of good memories, too, of the AP troops he served with -- and, yes occasionally snarled at -- during almost one-third of his life: Elton Fay, Frank Cormier, Barry Schweid, Bill Arbogast, Hugh Mulligan, and so many other characters and fine newsfolk.

If anyone is moved to wish "fsh" a happy 95th or reminisce a bit, I know he'd love to hear from you. He's at [703-765-7498](tel:703-765-7498) or, via me, at lisahoffman.editor@gmail.com His address is [6915 Lodestone Court, Alexandria VA 22306](#).

Best wishes to all, with the hope that 2018 might be a tad less, um, newsy

Connecting mailbox

Claudia DiMartino a model of how to face adversity

Andy Lippman ([Email](#)) - Claudia DiMartino's story on the reunion for lung transplant survivors (in Monday's Connecting) was an uplifting story and the perfect way to start my day.

Claudia addresses her situation with humor and candor and without self-pity. It is a reminder to me to do the same thing as I face adversity.

It is also the story of how the Hal Buell's caring spirit has been such great medicine for Claudia over the years.

I'm glad Claudia wrote the story and I'm glad Connecting featured it.

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Back into reporting with Lumina Foundation's 'Focus' magazine

Doug Richardson ([Email](#)) - I got back into reporting this fall for the new issue of the Lumina Foundation's "Focus" magazine. It was great to meet these exceptional, non-traditional students. And it was a lot of fun to connect with old friends now at Lumina: including Dave Powell, formerly of the (Indianapolis) Star; former AP colleague John Strauss, and Kevin Corcoran, who was an AP intern at the Indiana Legislature years ago.

Lumina is an Indianapolis-based foundation with about \$1.4 billion in assets. Its mission is to expand student access to and success in education beyond high school. Lumina's goal is to help increase the proportion of Americans with post-secondary credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.

This specific magazine project illustrates how people of all ages and backgrounds are finding their ways back into the education system, and how community colleges and other institutions are adapting to attract and retain non-traditional students.

[Click here](#) for a link to the issue.

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AP's Donna Cassata joining Washington Post

Julie Pace, AP's Washington bureau chief, announced Monday that Congress editor Donna Cassata is leaving AP later this month for a job at the Washington Post, where she will serve as deputy Congress editor. "Donna has been a valuable member of the AP Washington bureau for nearly 15 years," Pace said in a staff memo. "She led coverage of the 2004, 2006 and 2008 election cycles as political editor, then directed our coverage of the "Obamacare" debate in 2009-2010. Donna returned to Capitol Hill during the Obama administration as a reporter, covering defense and foreign policy, as well as Senate races in 2012 and House races in 2014. She was promoted to congressional news editor in 2014.

"We thank Donna for all of her contributions to AP over the years and wish her the best in her new position. Her last day in the bureau will be Dec. 22."

For AP reporters, revealing the 'Mosul Eye' was a lesson in journalistic persistence



Lori Hinnant



Maggie Michael

By **JAMES WARREN**, Poynter

It was a media mystery whose unraveling had potentially deadly consequences: Who is "Mosul Eye?"

For more than three years, Omar Mohammed was essentially a stealth historian in Iraq as he risked death cataloging ISIS horrors online as "Mosul Eye." He went to great lengths to hide his identity as he maintained his true persona as a jobless scholar in his native land. Hundreds of thousands read his dispatches, including journalists covering the region.

Ultimately, he fled to Europe and finally disclosed to the Associated Press that he indeed is the person who gave the world one window into the misdeeds of ISIS, including beheadings and stonings.

The story was broken by reporters Lori Hinnant and Maggie Michael. Hinnant is AP's Paris-based international security correspondent and has covered ISIS since 2013. Michael is a Cairo-based Egyptian journalist who joined the news organization in 2002.

Poynter interviewed them about the Mohammed saga via email, with the two reporters responding jointly.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright.

Stories of interest

Their family and friends call the media 'fake news.' But these students want to be journalists. (Washington Post)

By JULIE ZAUZMER

LYNCHBURG, Va. - What do you do when everyone around you thinks the media is "fake news" - and you want to work for the media?

That's the question professor Amy Bonebright needs to help her students answer. This is Liberty University, the world's largest evangelical Christian school. Most students come from politically and religiously conservative families and churches inclined not to trust the news - and, indeed, the president of the university is Jerry Falwell Jr., a fervent advocate for President Trump, who throws around the term "fake news" to refer to most mainstream media reporting.

So when Bonebright teaches a room full of aspiring reporters in her "Community Journalism" class, she needs to teach them more than just how to craft a lede and conduct an interview. "Now, everyone's down on the media," she says to her class. "Maybe you go home over break and see your parents' friends. And they say, 'Remind me what you're studying.'"

A nervous giggle rises from many of the students. They have had that conversation before.

"You say journalism, and they go, 'Hmm,'" Bonebright says. "What should our response be, as a Christian going into a field like that?"

Read more [here](#).

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The year local media gets conservative (Nieman Lab)

By WILL SOMMER

2018 will be the year that every media market in the country gets its own Fox News-style voice at the local level.

The FCC looks set to approve Sinclair Broadcast Group's nearly \$4 billion takeover of Tribune Media, ensuring that Sinclair's reliably conservative take on the news will soon reach 70 percent of households through TV affiliates. Not coincidentally, this will also be the breakout year for former Trump surrogate Boris Epshteyn, whose scorching commentaries in the president's defense Sinclair stations are required to air multiple times a week.

Meanwhile, conservative tycoons with less money to spend on their hobbies will recognize that a number of local papers are primed to be purchased on the cheap. This has already happened at LA Weekly, which was taken over late in 2017 by a shadowy conservative group of investors out of Orange County.

Read more [here](#).

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'Fake News,' Trump's Obsession, Is Now a Cudgel for Strongmen (New York Times)

By **STEVE ERLANGER**

BRUSSELS - President Trump routinely invokes the phrase "fake news" as a rhetorical tool to undermine opponents, rally his political base and try to discredit a mainstream American media that is aggressively investigating his presidency.

But he isn't the only leader enamored with the phrase. Following Mr. Trump's example, many of the world's autocrats and dictators are taking a shine to it, too.

When Amnesty International released a report about prison deaths in Syria, the Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, retorted that "we are living in a fake-news era." President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela, who is steadily rolling back democracy in his country, blamed the global media for "lots of false versions, lots of lies," saying "this is what we call 'fake news' today."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Sibby Christensen.

The Final Word

What Was the Most Influential Photograph in History? (Atlantic)

John Stanmeyer, photojournalist and co-founder, VII Photo agency

One image that summarizes our fragility and the need to work for peace is the simple yet poignant photograph of Earth taken by the astronaut William Anders during 1968's Apollo 8 mission.



Pete Souza, photographer and author, *Obama: An Intimate Portrait*

John Filo's photograph showing a woman kneeling over a victim of the Kent State shootings, taken in 1970, won a Pulitzer Prize, and was the first picture that riveted my attention as a teenager, when it appeared in my hometown newspaper.



Read more [here](#). Shared by Mike Holmes.

Today in History - December 13, 2017



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Dec. 13, the 347th day of 2017. There are 18 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 13, 1937, the Chinese city of Nanjing fell to Japanese forces during the Sino-Japanese War; what followed was a massacre of war prisoners, soldiers and citizens. (China maintains that up to 300,000 people were killed; Japanese nationalists say the death toll was far lower, and some maintain the massacre never happened.)

On this date:

In 1642, Dutch navigator Abel Tasman sighted present-day New Zealand.

In 1769, Dartmouth College in New Hampshire received its charter.

In 1862, Union forces led by Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside launched futile attacks against entrenched Confederate soldiers during the Civil War Battle of Fredericksburg; the soundly defeated Northern troops withdrew two days later.

In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson arrived in France, becoming the first chief executive to visit Europe while in office.

In 1928, George Gershwin's "An American in Paris" had its premiere at Carnegie Hall in New York.

In 1944, during World War II, the light cruiser USS Nashville was badly damaged in a Japanese kamikaze attack off Negros Island in the Philippines that claimed 133 lives.

In 1962, the United States launched Relay 1, a communications satellite which retransmitted television, telephone and digital signals.

In 1977, an Air Indiana Flight 216, a DC-3 carrying the University of Evansville basketball team on a flight to Nashville, crashed shortly after takeoff, killing all 29 people on board.

In 1981, authorities in Poland imposed martial law in a crackdown on the Solidarity labor movement. (Martial law formally ended in 1983.)

In 1994, an American Eagle commuter plane crashed short of Raleigh-Durham International Airport in North Carolina, killing 15 of the 20 people on board.

In 1996, the U.N. Security Council chose Kofi Annan (KOH'-fee AN'-nan) of Ghana to become the world body's seventh secretary-general.

In 2003, Saddam Hussein was captured by U.S. forces while hiding in a hole under a farmhouse in Adwar, Iraq, near his hometown of Tikrit.

Ten years ago: Democratic presidential hopefuls meeting in Johnston, Iowa, called for higher taxes on the highest-paid Americans and on big corporations in an unusually cordial debate. Rupert Murdoch completed his \$5 billion-plus deal to acquire Dow Jones & Co., adding The Wall Street Journal to his global media conglomerate. Major League Baseball's Mitchell Report was released, identifying 85 names to differing degrees in connection with the alleged use of performance-enhancing drugs.

Five years ago: U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice withdrew from consideration to replace outgoing Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton after running into opposition from Republicans over her explanation of the September attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, that killed Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans. (Rice had said the attack stemmed from a spontaneous protest over an anti-Islamic video, an assertion which later proved incorrect.)

One year ago: President-elect Donald Trump announced his choice of ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson to be U.S. secretary of state. Louisville quarterback Lamar Jackson was named The Associated Press' college football Player of the Year. Actor Alan Thicke, best remembered as the beloved dad on the ABC series "Growing Pains," died in Los Angeles at age 69. Lawrence Colburn, a helicopter gunner during the Vietnam War who helped end the slaughter of hundreds of unarmed Vietnamese villagers by U.S. troops at My Lai (mee ly), died in Canton, Georgia, at age 67.

Today's Birthdays: Former Secretary of State George P. Shultz is 97. Actor-comedian Dick Van Dyke is 92. Actor Christopher Plummer is 88. Country singer Buck White is 87. Music/film producer Lou Adler is 84. Singer John Davidson is 76. Actress Kathy Garver (TV: "Family Affair") is 72. Singer Ted Nugent is 69. Rock musician Jeff "Skunk" Baxter is 69. Country musician Ron Getman is 69. Actor Robert Lindsay is 68. Country singer-musician Randy Owen is 68. Actress Wendie Malick is 67. Former Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack is 67. Former Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke is 64. Country singer John Anderson is 63. Singer-songwriter Steve Forbert is 63. Singer-actor Morris Day is 61. Actor Steve Buscemi (boo-SEH'-mee) is 60. Actor Johnny Whitaker (TV: "Family Affair") is 58. Rock musician John Munson (Semisonic; Twilight Hours) is 55. Actress-reality TV star NeNe Leakes is 51. Actor-comedian Jamie Foxx is 50. Actor Bart Johnson is 47. Actor Jeffrey Pierce is 46. TV personality Debbie Matenopoulos is 43. Rock singer-musician Thomas Delonge is 42. Actor James Kyson Lee is 42. Actress Chelsea Hertford is 36. Rock singer Amy Lee (Evanescence) is 36. Actor Michael Socha is 30. Neo-soul musician Wesley Watkins (Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats) is 30. Actor Marcel Spears (TV: "The Mayor") is 29. Singer Taylor Swift is 28. Actress Maisy Stella is 14.

Thought for Today: "A society in which men recognize no check upon their freedom soon becomes a society where freedom is the possession of only a savage few." - Judge Learned Hand, American jurist (1872-1961).

Got a story or photos 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:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.

- **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.

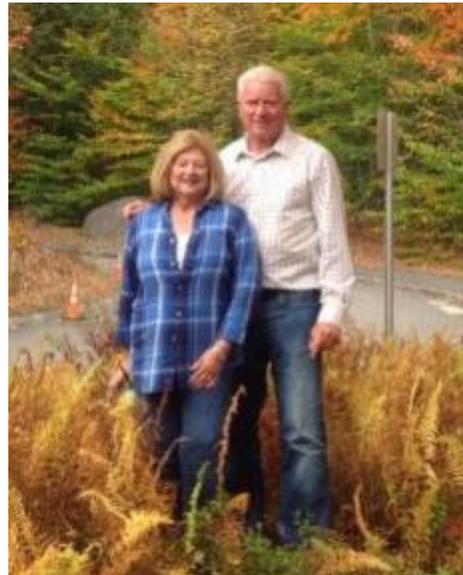
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **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.

- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.



Paul Stevens
Editor, Connecting newsletter
paulstevens46@gmail.com

Connecting newsletter, [14719 W 79th Ter, Lenexa, KS 66215](https://www.google.com/maps/place/14719+W+79th+Ter,+Lenexa,+KS+66215)

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