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Connecting - December 28, 2017

1 message

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning!

Connecting is back in your mailbox after a week-long Christmas in Connecticut Vacation.

Ye Olde Editor is clearing the cobwebs from the 10-state, 19-hour, 1,300-mile driving journey (each way!) with his wife Linda. The roads were dry and the audiobooks (Red Sparrow and its sequel, Palace of Treason - both by Jason Matthews) made the miles melt away.

Borrowing from Simon and Garfunkel's "All Come to Look for America" and the haunting refrain of "Counting the cars on the New Jersey Turnpike" - which we were on for a while, one of the thousands of cars counted, I guess - we came through such cities as Columbia, St. Louis, Effingham, Indianapolis, Richmond, Columbus, Zanesville, Wheeling, Washington, Harrisburg, Allentown and Westchester before motoring over the Tappan Zee Bridge (right) and in to tiny New Canaan where our older daughter and her family live.



We hope yours was a Merry Christmas as well.

Have you made a New Year's resolution? Want to share it with your colleagues? Send it along today.

Here's one resolution for you!

If you'd like to play a bigger role in helping out journalism and the AP, you might consider this as one of your resolutions.

This from Connecting colleague **Patti Baker**, who writes:

Former chiefs, ACOBs, news editors, photo editors and broadcast editors will remember how important the annual editorial/broadcast contests have always been to AP members. As staffs have shrunk in member newsrooms, it has become harder to find judges willing to dedicate some time and their sharp talents to reviewing entries and declaring winners, writing compelling comments and meeting the judging deadline.

So we turn to the amazing readership of Connecting to ask for your help. Many of our state boards have agreed to open judging to former AP editorial staff. It's not hard duty. It involves reading, watching some good TV and listening to great radio

journalism and making your selections online. In exchange, we would give every judge who takes an assignment (and completes it by deadline) free access to the online AP Stylebook for a year! It's easy to use, updated frequently and best of all -- searchable!

We'll take care not to overload you with entries. We appreciate your time and your expertise!

Interested? Please contact Patti Baker, marketing coordinator, at pbaker@ap.org with your name, email address, phone number and city and state.

You don't need to be former AP staff to volunteer. Your news experiences are valued, and would be welcomed, from all organizations represented in Connecting.

Have a great day - and let your colleagues know about your resolutions for 2018. I am glad to be back with you.

Paul

The D.C. sportswriter who went from covering the Redskins to selling organic food



(Jen Dominic for The Washington Post)

By **DAN STEINBERG**

The Washington Post

STAUNTON, Va. - The tin of cookies emerged from behind his desk, three dozen or so. They were dark chocolate-cranberry-pumpkin-maple. The pumpkin came from real pumpkins, which Joseph White had acquired by asking businesses in this marvelous downtown whether they still needed their decorative Halloween gourds. The cookies were delightful.

If White had brought a baked treat like this to the Redskins Park media trailer - which he did, week after week, year after year, during some of the craziest moments in franchise history - "I'd have to hire two guards to keep [reporters] away," he noted.

But his new colleagues are a bit different than the ones he left behind in Ashburn. Three dozen homemade cookies here last days, not seconds. He's given up on the idea of throwing parties centered around food. And when White takes his employees out for dinner, he can pay with a \$20 bill and get change. "These people just don't eat," he said of the staff at Cranberry's Grocery & Eatery.

There are other differences, too. The folks inside Cranberry's aren't glued to Twitter, aren't surgically attached to their phones and don't particularly care whether the Redskins opt for continuity or chaos this offseason. Which isn't to say nothing changes here. On the day I visited the natural-food outpost now owned by White, he offered up a brand-new creation dreamed up by his staffers: Earl Grey rolls. Imagine a cinnamon roll dipped in bergamot oil, and served warm. They were delightful, too.

You might not know White's name, but you've probably read his work or heard his voice. For about two decades, he was the Associated Press's D.C. sports correspondent, the guy who asked the first question at most Redskins news conferences, the man tasked with describing Christmas Eve at FedEx Field for readers across the country. He wrote about Norv Turner and Marty Schottenheimer, about Steve Spurrier and Joe Gibbs, about Clinton Portis's costumes and Sean Taylor's death. He chronicled the return of baseball, the rise of Ovechkin and the fall of Arenas. He traveled to five Olympics, covered the National Spelling Bee as well as anyone has ever covered anything and was named the 2005 AP Sportswriter of the Year. Then he left, taking a sabbatical from the AP and buying a health-food store and restaurant 140 miles from Ashburn.

The sabbatical is over. White isn't coming back.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Brian Horton, Chris Connell

Sexual misconduct allegations voted top news story in annual AP poll of U.S. editors, news directors



By **DAVID CRARY**

The wave of sexual misconduct allegations that toppled Hollywood power brokers, politicians, media icons and many others was the top news story of 2017, according to The Associated Press' annual poll of U.S. editors and news directors.

The No. 2 story was Donald Trump's tumultuous first year as president. A year ago, Trump's unexpected victory over Hillary Clinton in the presidential election was a near-unanimous pick for the top news story of 2016.

Other stories on the 2017 list included the mass shooting in Las Vegas that killed 58 people; the onslaught of hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria; the tensions sparked by North Korea's tests of ballistic missiles and a hydrogen bomb; the probe into possible coordination between Russia and Donald Trump's election campaign; the failed Republican effort to repeal Barack Obama's health care law; the Republican-backed tax overhaul; the worldwide terror attacks; and the successful military assaults on the Islamic State's two biggest strongholds.

The first AP top-stories poll was conducted in 1936, when editors chose the abdication of Britain's King Edward VIII as the top story.

[Click here](#) to read the story.

And...

The Year in Photos: News



Every year, The Associated Press chooses a selection of photos that best documents the year's top news stories as chronicled by photojournalists around the world. Today, this collection was distributed by the AP to its members and subscribers worldwide.

This year's set of compelling and newsworthy images was selected by Acting Director of Photography Denis Paquin.

[Click here](#) for a gallery featuring this year's news selection.

I've found a new hobby (playing the harmonica) because it helps keep me breathing better. I know a lot of ex-APers are of an age that respiratory problems show up and they might be enticed to look into their problems before they are a "real problem." As I mentioned, I literally couldn't walk across a room without being out of breath.

Man Proposes; the Gods Laugh It Off

By **MORT ROSENBLUM** ([Email](#))

TUCSON - For reporters, things go according to plan, or it's a story. I finally made it to Arizona from deepest Provence in time for leftover latkes at Christmas. But I now see why those eight tiny reindeer badly need travel insurance, a sense of humor and drugs.

Travelers' tales are usually cheap shots. If we survive to tell them, we've escaped real tragedy. Listeners fidget, impatient to chime in with their own. This, despite all the first person, is not about me but rather what we have made of our world.

It started as one of those best-laid plans. I paid the usual Air France extortion money for Sky Priority, lowering the chance of standing in endless lines eyeing the clock as my gut deteriorates. Then, nothing to it: a one-stop hop from Paris to Tucson.

I'd harvest my olives and take a fast train to Paris, leaving time to sort out the assorted crap I lug about the globe. But then I decided to squeeze in a pop over to Portugal for a party, just a two-hour Nice-Lisbon puddle jump return. Dumb.

Read more [here](#).

AP's Donna Casatta joining Washington Post

Donna Casatta ([Email](#))- a Connecting colleague, shared this with fellow AP staffers on December 22. She started her AP career in Albany in 1983, moved to Washington in 1986 and left in 1994 for Congressional Quarterly. She returned to the AP in 2003:

I'm leaving the AP after nearly 26 years - two tours of duty - for a job at the Washington Post.

It's been an adventure, from sportswriter in Albany, N.Y., to military reporter on Capitol Hill, to political editor for three election cycles to congressional news editor the last three years.

Along the way, I've realized - debatable, I know - that an editor is only as good as the reporters working for him. Past and present, I've worked with reporters who broke news and produced those magical words on cable TV and websites "the AP is reporting." It's a very long list of all-stars, too many to list here. But I have to praise Dave Espo, Erica Werner, the girls on the campaign bus of 2008 (Nedra Pickler, Liz Sidoti, Beth Fouhy, Libby Quaid) and the tireless congressional team this year - Alan Fram, Andrew Taylor, Stephen Ohlemacher, Richard Lardner, Mary Clare Jalonick, Matthew Daly, Kevin Freking, Juliet Linderman and Marcy Gordon.



My thanks to all those reporters, plus the hard-working Washington desk editors - Bob Furlow, Eileen Putman, Tom Strong and their compatriots - for making me look good.

I wish you the best.

The Salvation of 'Napalm Girl'

By Kim Phuc Phan Thi

For The Wall Street Journal, Dec. 21

You may not recognize me now, but you almost certainly know who I am. My name is Kim Phuc, though you likely know me by another name. It is one I never asked for, a name I have spent a lifetime trying to escape: "Napalm Girl."

You have probably seen my picture a thousand times. Yes, that picture. The image that made the world gasp. Some called it a turning point in the Vietnam War—a Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph of me in 1972, age 9, running along a puddled roadway in front of an expressionless soldier. I was photographed with arms outstretched, naked and shrieking in pain and fear, with the dark contour of a napalm cloud billowing in the distance.

My own people had dropped bombs on Route 1 in an effort to cut off the trade routes for the Viet Cong rebels. I had not been targeted. I had simply been in the wrong place at the wrong time.



Those bombs have caused me immeasurable pain over the course of my life. Forty-five years later I am still receiving treatment for the burns that cover my arms, back and neck. But even worse than the physical pain was the emotional and spiritual pain. For years I bore the crippling weight of anger, bitterness and resentment toward those who caused my suffering. Yet as I look back over a spiritual journey that has spanned more than three decades, I realize the same bombs that caused so much pain and suffering also brought me to a place of great healing. Those bombs led me to Jesus Christ.

View more [here](#). Shared by Marcus Eliason, John Lumpkin. (As most of you know, the photographer behind the lens of that iconic picture of Kim was our Connecting colleague Nick Ut.)

Stories of interest



2017: The nation's cartoonists on the year in politics (Politico)

Every month political cartoonists throughout the country and across the political spectrum apply their ink-stained skills to capture the foibles, memes, hypocrisies and other head-slapping events in the world of politics. The fruits of these labors are hundreds of cartoons that entertain and enrage readers of all political stripes. Here's an offering of the best of this year's crop, picked fresh off the Toonosphere. Edited by Matt Wuerker.

[Click here](#) to view.

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Obituary project makes homicide victims more than just stats

By NATALIE POMPILIO

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - It was a bloody day in Philadelphia: five people shot or stabbed dead. One of the shooting victims was Trina Singleton's 24-year-old son, Darryl.

In this city of 1.6 million people that tallied 269 homicides last year, Darryl's death on Sept. 13, 2016, earned him a few lines near the end of a newspaper story, his loss overshadowed by the death of a 21-year-old cousin of rap star Meek Mill.

"He was totally overlooked," Trina Singleton said. "There were so many people shot that day, he was a number."

Now a new website is working to show that Darryl and victims like him are more than statistics. Since the Philadelphia Obituary Project went live in June, it has posted more than 30 in-depth obituaries of city homicide victims from the past 18 months.

"We want to talk about the lives of the people, not their deaths. To dignify them. To humanize them," said Cletus Lyman, a city lawyer who has spent more than \$10,000 to fund the project. "We want to complete the picture and show the community that we're losing real people."

Read more [here](#).

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Spielberg's 'The Post' Provides Fitting End to Turbulent Year for the Media (New York Times)

By **JIM RUTENBERG**

After a year of high- and low-level attacks on the press and the First Amendment, there's plenty to appreciate in Steven Spielberg's new movie, "The Post," which some people around here believe should be called "The Times."

With a focus on the as-yet-untested Washington Post publisher Katharine Graham, played by Meryl Streep, "The Post" tells the story of how portions of a classified government study about the Vietnam War made their way into her newspaper.

The Post began to run stories based on the top-secret study - which provided evidence that the Nixon, Johnson and Kennedy administrations had lied to the public about the war effort and its chances for success - only after The New York Times published articles quoting from it in summer 1971.

The Nixon administration challenged The Times aggressively, accusing it of violating the Espionage Act and winning a temporary court order that blocked the newspaper from publishing more of what became known as the Pentagon Papers.

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

The Final Word

Saying it all in a newspaper obit of fewer than seven words

From Connecting colleague **Ed Williams**:

A woman goes into the local newspaper office to see that the obituary for her recently deceased husband is published. The obit editor informs her that there is a charge of 50 cents per word.

She pauses, reflects, and then says well, then, let it read "Fred Brown died."

Amused at the woman's thrift, the editor tells her that there is a seven-word minimum for all obituaries.

She thinks it over and in a few seconds says, "In that case, let it read, 'Fred Brown died: golf clubs for sale.'"

Today in History - December 28, 2017



By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Dec. 28, the 362nd day of 2017. There are three days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 28, 1917, the New York Evening Mail published "A Neglected Anniversary," a facetious essay by H.L. Mencken supposedly recounting the history of bathtubs in America, starting with the "first" one in Cincinnati in 1842. Among the spoof's other straight-faced claims: that Millard Fillmore was the first president to have a bathtub installed in the White House. (Mencken was astonished when people took his "tissue of absurdities" seriously.)

On this date:

In 1612, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei observed the planet Neptune, but mistook it for a star. (Neptune wasn't officially discovered until 1846 by Johann Gottfried Galle.)

In 1832, John C. Calhoun became the first vice president of the United States to resign, stepping down because of differences with President Andrew Jackson.

In 1846, Iowa became the 29th state to be admitted to the Union.

In 1856, the 28th president of the United States, Thomas Woodrow Wilson, was born in Staunton (STAN'-tun), Virginia.

In 1895, the Lumiere brothers, Auguste and Louis, held the first public showing of their movies in Paris.

In 1937, composer Maurice Ravel died in Paris at age 62.

In 1945, Congress officially recognized the Pledge of Allegiance.

In 1961, the Tennessee Williams play "Night of the Iguana" opened on Broadway. Former first lady Edith Bolling Galt Wilson, the second wife of President Woodrow Wilson, died in Washington at age 89.

In 1973, the book "Gulag Archipelago," Alexander Solzhenitsyn's expose (eks-poh-SAY') of the Soviet prison system, was first published in Paris.

In 1981, Elizabeth Jordan Carr, the first American "test-tube" baby, was born in Norfolk, Virginia.

In 1987, the bodies of 14 relatives of Ronald Gene Simmons were found at his home near Dover, Arkansas, after Simmons shot and killed two other people in Russellville. (Simmons, who never explained his motives, was executed in 1990.)

In 1997, one woman was killed when a United Airlines jumbo jet en route from Narita, Japan, to Honolulu encountered severe turbulence over the Pacific.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush used a "pocket veto" to reject a sweeping defense bill because he objected to a provision that would have exposed the Iraqi government to expensive lawsuits seeking damages from the Saddam Hussein era. Six French charity workers sentenced to eight years' forced labor in Chad for allegedly trying to kidnap 103 children were transferred to French custody. (The workers were later pardoned by Chad's president and set free.) David Letterman's production company, Worldwide Pants, reached an interim agreement with the Writers Guild allowing his talk show as well as Craig Ferguson's to return to the air with their full writing staffs during a Hollywood writers' strike.

Five years ago: Dockworkers along the East Coast and the Gulf of Mexico agreed to extend their contract for more than a month, averting a strike that could have crippled major ports from Boston to Houston and bottled up billions of dollars' worth of cargo. (A new contract was ratified in April 2013.) Russia's President Vladimir Putin signed a law banning Americans from adopting Russian children.

One year ago: Actress Debbie Reynolds, who lit up the screen in "Singin' in the Rain" and other Hollywood classics, died at age 84 a day after losing her daughter, Carrie Fisher, who was 60. Former world No. 1 Ana Ivanovic (ee-VAH'-noh-vich) said she was retiring from tennis after a series of injuries meant she could no longer play at the highest level.

Today's Birthdays: Comic book creator Stan Lee is 95. Former United Auto Workers union president Owen Bieber is 88. Actress Nichelle Nichols is 85. Actress Dame Maggie Smith is 83. Rock singer-musician Charles Neville is 79. Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., is 73. Former Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., is 71. Rock singer-musician Edgar Winter is 71. Funk musician Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste (The Meters) is 69. Actor Denzel Washington is 63. Country singer Joe Diffie is 59. Country musician Mike McGuire (Shenandoah) is 59. Actor Chad McQueen is 57. Country singer-musician Marty Roe (Diamond Rio) is 57. Actor Malcolm Gets is 54. Actor Mauricio Mendoza is 48. Actress Elaine Hendrix is 47. Talk show host Seth Meyers is 44. Actor Brendan Hines is 41. Actor Joe Manganiello is 41. Actress Vanessa Ferlito is 40. Rhythm-and-blues singer John Legend is 39. Rapper-musician-producer Terrace Martin is 39. Actor Andre Holland is 38. Actress Sienna Miller is 36. Actress Beau Garrett (TV: "The Good Doctor") is 35. Pop singer Kasey

Sheridan (Dream) is 31. Actor Thomas Dekker is 30. Actress Mackenzie Rosman is 28. Pop singer David Archuleta is 27. Actress Mary-Charles Jones (TV: "Kevin Can Wait") is 16. Actor Miles Brown is 13.

Thought for Today: "Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." - Carl Sagan, American astronomer (1934-1996).

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.

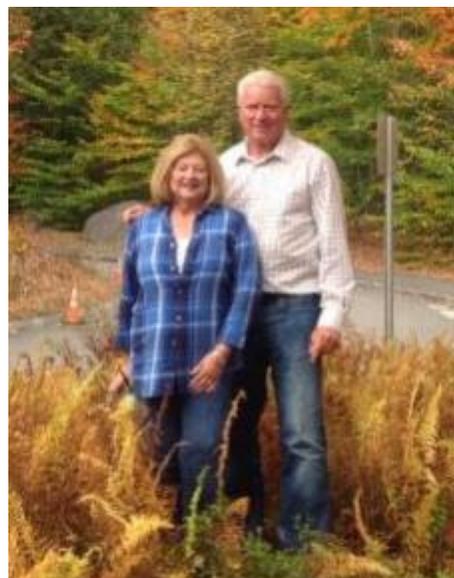
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **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.



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