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Connecting - December 29, 2017

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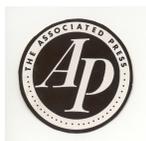
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Fri, Dec 29, 2017 at 9:03 AM

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Connecting

December 29, 2017

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Colleagues,

We lead today's issue of Connecting with a profile of **Merrill Hartson**, who retires from the Washington bureau on Sunday (December 31) after a 44-year career with The Associated Press.

It is written by **Chris Connell**, and there is a side story to the profile that Chris explains here:



"It isn't easy to arrange an interview with someone on the graveyard shift, especially if he's pulling a double as Merrill did the week before Christmas and retirement. But we squeezed it in one evening and I banged it out ahead of my own deadline: Nancy and I were booked to fly to Geneva on Boxing Day to meet our first grandchild, who was due on the Ides but waited until Christmas morn to arrive. Here's the moment I Ciara (pronounced Kira) and I made acquaintance. Her dad, James, and mom, Sarah, who's Irish, doing well, too.

"My friendship with Merrill goes back 40 years. When Merrill confided at Terry Hunt's goodbye party that he had the finish line in sight, I immediately told Paul Stevens to mark me down for a profile. A great journalist (reporter and editor), person and personality, the latter only hinted at in these 2,000 words."

Thanks to Chris for his fine work and to **Terry Enfield** for providing photos to go with the story. And thanks to Merrill for his wonderful contributions to journalism in his years with The Associated Press. We're glad he will remain with us on Connecting.

NOTE: Apologies to Connecting colleague **Donna Cassata** for the misspelling of her name in Thursday's issue. Donna is joining The Washington Post from AP's Washington bureau.

Here's to a great and safe New Year's holiday weekend.

Paul

No more double shifts for Washington ironman Merrill Hartson



Merrill Hartson holds photo of himself at his AP work station and his identical twin brother Mitchell is beside him. Merrill's niece Amy Hartson Davis posted this photo on Facebook and said, "We celebrated Hartson Christmas a little early this year so everyone could be home for the holiday. We also got a chance to celebrate my Uncle Merrill's retirement after a forty plus year career in the Washington bureau of the AP... In a day and age when the press is routinely barraged with criticism, I can say that I have seen up close the dedication, patience and endurance that this career requires. It is a public service. Congratulations Uncle Merrill! We're all so proud of your work these many years."

By CHRIS CONNELL ([Email](#))

Merrill Hartson showed up at the Washington bureau on a day in March 1977 when all hell was breaking loose. Hanafi Muslims had taken over the District Building, the headquarters of B'nai B'rith and the Islamic Center, killing a radio reporter and wounding future Mayor Marion Barry. Nobody had time to say hello to the new transfer from Richmond much less show him the ropes.

"I hid behind the big pillars to stay out of the way. Then, after eight hours of standing around, you can imagine how thrilled I was to go out and find my car was gone. I'd parked in a tow-away zone on K Street," he says.

Things went uphill from there.

Longtime Washington editor Merrill Hartson, he with the jowly, map-of-Ireland face, bemused smile and basso profundo voice, is retiring effective Dec. 31 shortly before his 75th birthday after a half century in the news business, 44 years with AP. His last

shift is today. He's going out in customary style, holding down the fort on the overnight and often putting in an extra eight hours on the broadcast desk.



A photo by ELVIS trainer Paula Froke of Terry Hunt and David Pace watching as Merrill Hartson files the first story written and filed in ELVIS from the WDC bureau. ELVIS is AP's internal content-management system.

He's filled almost every role WDC has to offer short of bureau chief: newsman, political editor, the White House, Justice and Labor beats, congressional staff chief and news editor, twice an assistant administrator, AMs supervisor and, since 2015, the guy who answers the phone in the middle of the night.

"The graveyard shift has taken on far more significance than the days we remember in the '70s and '80s," says Hartson. "It's not a boring, no-news period. Everything's happening at once, all over the world, at 2, 3, 4 and 5 o'clock that in some way or another require a Washington response." And that was before Tweets began landing like hand grenades in the light of dawn.

"You make a lot of decisions in that job. For five or six hours, you are the Washington AP," says the native of "way, way, way upstate New York."

Merrill and identical twin Mitchell were born in 1943 in Gouverneur, New York, 20 miles from the St. Lawrence Seaway Bridge. "Our lives started somewhat erratically," he says.

From the age of three, the twins grew up in orphanages and foster homes. There are still blank boxes on the family tree, despite Merrill and Mitchell's genealogical "gumshoeing," but they have connected with half-brothers and sisters. They wound up in the loving home of an Ellisburg, N.Y., policeman and wife, Herbert and Myrtle Mathews, excelled in high school, where Merrill captained the basketball team, and developed an early passion for broadcasting.

"We were radio nuts," he said. "We'd sit in the kitchen in the midst of blizzards and listen to an old radio playing music on WNEWW in New York at 10 o'clock at night."

"We organized record hops and made deals with record companies. We had sampler records coming to us in the mail two or three times a week. That's what led us to Ithaca College, one of the foremost radio TV colleges in the country."

But "tuition was ridiculous for two welfare kids," so they transferred after a year to the State University of New York, Oswego, where Merrill majored in history. Two days after graduation 1965, draft notices arrived in the mail as the Vietnam War heated up. They joined separate reserve units. Merrill completed his Army duty in 1967 in the Defense Information School at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indiana and landed a job at WRVA in Richmond, the biggest radio station in Virginia, where he spent six years as news director, hosted a talk show and spun records.

"Strangely enough, at 22 years old, my voice sounded exactly the same as now," he says. But job security was less on that side of the media and he left WRVA after daughter Kelby was born in 1973 for an outfit with better pay and broader horizons, the AP.

"I had done a lot of business at broadcast meetings with Bob Gallimore, the Richmond bureau chief," he says. "I didn't want to end up on the street because a bad ratings book came in or I said the wrong thing on the air." And Gallimore needed a strong editor to keep broadcast members happy.

"I walked in there and got a stupendous pay raise, top scale, thousands more than I was making," he says.

"I came to understand in the first six months that in this organization, print - we have to call it text now, which bugs me - was everything. Broadcast was a service we offered to paying customers. But it hit me like a rock that if I really wanted to get a promotion in the AP, I needed to navigate from the broadcast desk to the state desk."

When the correspondent in the Capitol went on disability, Gallimore dispatched Hartson to fill in. At WRVA he'd cultivated strong sources among lawmakers, aides and lobbyists alike. He never went back to the broadcast operation.

The star of his friend Dave Riley, the Norfolk correspondent, had also risen rapidly within AP. After Riley advanced to the desk in Washington, Hartson solicited his help in arranging for interviews with Bureau Chief Marv Arrowsmith and deputy Burl Osborne, who were suitably impressed. With Wes Gallagher's blessing, the transfer came through.

Hartson was in the vanguard of a wave of talent who transferred to WX - the old call sign - in the late 1970s and early 1980s and became backbones.

Larry Margasak and Joe Hebert also arrived in 1977. Carole Feldman, Bob Furlow and Marty Crutsinger soon followed, with Alan Fram, Jill Lawrence, Jim Drinkard, Susanne Schafer, Steve Komarow, Nancy Benac and others on board not long afterwards. The bureau also picked up wordsmiths Bob Andrews, Mike Feinsilber and, later, Cal Woodward.

Hartson worked under Riley on the general desk until Bureau Chief Walter Mears tapped him to edit the headline-making House hearings on the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. Mears then made Hartson the political editor for the 1980 campaign, running a desk that included Lee Byrd, G.G. LaBelle and Bob Andrews. "That was a good cast," says Merrill. "1980 was one of my favorite years."



Press credential photo, circa 1980

Afterwards it was the Labor beat, hitting the 1984 campaign trail with Ronald Reagan and Walter Mondale, a short stint at Justice, then AMs supervisor and special projects editor. "In '87, as a reward, (Bureau Chief) Charles J. Lewis sent me to the White House."

He went to the Hill in 1989 and became a news editor in 1993, spending a decade on the administrative payroll before resuming his career on the desk - and becoming eligible again for overtime - in 2002.

His twin, who retired a decade ago as head of the Army's culinary school at Fort Lee, Virginia, once showed up on a Saturday to visit his brother at the old office at [2021 K Street](#) in an era before the elevators and doors were locked. "I was in the coffee room. Suzanne Shaffer turned and said, 'Merrill, why are you just standing there? I've got a story for you to edit.'"

"If you knew us well, you would never have any problem distinguishing between us. But (others) would think it was me," allows Merrill.

And the voice? "Not quite as deep, but mellifluous."

His own sonorous voice was a relief to hear for many an AP reporter calling in from far or near.

"Merrill was exactly the person you wanted to pick up the phone when you were calling with a bulletin, like when President (George W.) Bush secretly flew to Iraq for a Thanksgiving visit. Merrill was all business, not a bit flustered or hesitant," says former White House correspondent Terry Hunt. "He'd stop me every few grafts so he could put more of the story on the wire and then pick up where we'd left off."

They shared the crowded White House booth at the end of the Reagan years. "He paid a lot of attention to his leads, mouthing the words to make sure they sounded right," Hunt recalls. "When chaos erupts and everyone's hair is on fire, Merrill is the guy sitting calmly at a computer screen, writing a sharp lead."

Bob Burns, too, says, "I have called in to the desk from dozens, if not hundreds, of places around the world and always felt reassured ... when Merrill who answered the call. One of the more frantic moments was in Iraq in February 2004 when I called Merrill from a satellite phone to get the word out that Gen. John Abizaid and his party (which included me) had come under insurgent fire while in Fallujah. Merrill was calm and collected."

Will Lester remembers his consternation covering Bush at a Fourth of July event where "the sun was so bright I couldn't see the computer screen and file" before the pool had to race back to the motorcade. "I called Merrill and told him I would need to dictate. His answer: 'You're on the wire. You look great!' He had pulled it off CNN."



Hartson with fellow AP editors participating in a video conference with Executive Editor Kathleen Carroll in 1998.

Mears says Hartson "spent his AP Washington career as editor behind the bylines. His own byline was rare but his editing polished and moved many others every day. Editors are the unacclaimed heroes of the AP news report. With his retirement Merrill joins the honor roll of great AP editors ... I worked with (including) Frank Murphy in Boston, Herb Barker and Ed Dennehy in New York, Don Sanders in Washington and many more."

David Briscoe said, "Merrill's talents, charm and wit are boundless. He probably had as great a good impact on as many reporters and as much copy as anyone who ever worked in the Washington bureau or on Capitol Hill. And, I never saw anyone more hard-working and effective as a reporter, particularly when he had the White House beat."

Hartson almost never called in sick and has been blessed with good health, But it was his doctor who finally convinced him after a routine physical that "you should take time to enjoy the life you have earned."



Hartson with fellow AP 25-plus year scribes at the annual AP banquet in 1994.

He stayed for decades because "I love this work. There's something about the infectious nature of journalism that not only attracts people to the profession, but keeps them in it, keeps them from wanting to leave."

"I've always seemed to have a lot of energy for this business," he says, but won't miss working the wee hours. "The human body wasn't designed to be a nocturnally functioning organ."

"The first thing I have to do is learn how not to have breakfast at 10 p.m., lunch at 2:30 a.m. and dinner at 9 a.m.," says Hartson. "I am going to take a couple of weeks, three weeks, a month, two months if necessary, and get my body clock reset because I am out of whack."

"After I've gotten back into a daily rhythm, my goal is to catch up on the missed exercise, catch up on going to Mass as frequently as I want to and should, catch up on going to the library and spending an afternoon reading, catch up on the advantages of living in Washington, D.C., with all the great museums and other things," he says.

He doesn't rule out starting an enterprise down the road "to supplement my income or simply to avoid having nothing to do. Mitchell says one of the secrets to retirement, to avoid becoming bored and sedated, is to get out of the house."



Hartson greeted by Attorney General Edwin Meese at Department of Justice, February 1985.

Now Merrill and Terry, who manages a busy D.C. law firm, will have time to do that. They married in 2014. "We're practically newlyweds," he says.

"It's been a great run," says Hartson. "I've been extremely fortunate."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Merrill's email is - jrdhartson@peoplepc.com

A new career? Bruce Richardson of 'Pulmonaires' (and harmonica) explains



Bruce Richardson (Email) - I never thought that retirement and later health problems could lead you to a new career and one that's really fun too, but that's happened to me! I'm part of a group called "The Pulmonaires" and we are learning how to play harmonicas.

I kind of laughed when I was asked to join at the New Jersey hospital where I still go for "lung therapy" four years after being diagnosed with COPD and emphysema. I quit smoking 30 years ago and had run many road races since including six marathons. But four years ago, I couldn't walk from one side of the room to the other without being out of breath.

I'm just receiving maintenance therapy now, but, the pulmonary nurses handling the program say that studies have shown that the blowing in and out on harmonicas is really good for increasing and restoring lost lung capacity.

It didn't take too long to get over the fear of looking and sounding like fools to discover that playing sounds on the harmonicas is really, really fun. My group meets once a week at 7:30 a.m. and no one complains that we've all driven many miles to get to practice. There are a 13 members in our performing group but only one has musical ability on his resume. He plays the keyboard that covers up many of our miscues-which really are getting fewer and far between.

We had our first concert last week at the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Christmas Party in Freehold, NJ. We have another major gig scheduled in April before a regional meeting of respiratory therapists in Princeton, NJ. We don't have an agent but we're looking - haha!

I can't tell you how much fun it is to be doing something that's also healthy. I'm sure that lots of us ex-APers, who did work years ago in smoke filled rooms, could have breathing problems.

[Click here](#) to listen to my hobby.

Memories of an earlier New Year's Eve

Gene Herrick ([Email](#)) - As an Associated Press photographer, holidays often meant working somewhere, and usually covering some important sporting event.

In 1962 I went to cover the 1962 Men's World Ice Hockey Championships at the Broadmoor Resort in Colorado Spring, Colorado.

There is one big reason I remember this event so well. It was New Year's Eve, and I had a bad case of hemorrhoids. But what made it worse was that I had to climb a wooden ladder some 10 feet up to the photographer's loft overlooking the rink. The contestants were the U.S., Russia, Canada, and a team I do not recall. Each step up and down that ladder brought tears to my eyes, but more importantly, pain to that end of my anatomy.

My darkroom was in the public toilet in an adjoining building, which was not being used at the time. It was the most unique AP darkroom setup I had ever used. There were at least 15 sinks across one wall, and the same number of urinals on the

opposite wall. Each time I used the facility I would use a different urinal. High living, I thought.

After processing my film and transmitting the picture that night, I went to a New Year's Eve party for the teams, the officials, and the news media. I met the physician to the Canadian team, and during the conversation related my rear-end problem. He sympathized, and gave me two pain pills, and told me to take one at bedtime, and the other upon arising the next morning. He said to follow his orders that the Canadian pills were stronger than those in the U.S. He also warned me to only have one glass of champagne at midnight. He also kiddingly said he didn't think kissing a Russian Hockey player at midnight would be good idea!

I took the pain pill as I got in bed. However, I was awake most of the night swearing at my derriere. Next morning I had breakfast with the good doctor who asked my condition. I told him I was awake most of the night. I asked him, "Was I supposed to take those pills orally, or rectally?" He gasped, looked questionably at me, and then burst into laughter.

Happy New Year!

Kidnapped by Columbus - new Marc Wilson book to be published in January

Marc Wilson ([Email](#)) - a Connecting colleague, is in the final throes of publishing his second book. Here's what the book cover will say:

"Christopher Columbus wanted proof that he'd reached the edge of India. So when he returned to Spain in 1493, he brought to the court of Queen Isabella samples of gold, exotic plants, strange birds, and six "Indians."

"Kidnapped by Columbus" is the fictional - largely accurate -- account of the "Indians" voyage to the Old World told through the eyes of a 14-year-old Native American. Columbus and his "Indians" returned to Spain at the height of the Inquisition, in the wake of the expulsion of all Jews, and the final defeat of Islam in Iberia. The kidnapped "Indians" encounter some of the most important figures in history - Isabella and Ferdinand, Grand Inquisitor Tomas Torquemada, Catherine of Aragon, the ill-fated Prince Juan, and Pope Rodrigo Borgia, who issues Papal Bulls that affect the boundaries of the Western Hemisphere to this day."

The book is being published in print and online by Floricanto Press of Moorpark, California.

Wilson said the book should be available for purchase in late January.

Marc's previous book, Hero Street U.S.A., was published in 2009 by the University of Oklahoma Press. The Spanish translation of Hero Street was published in 2012 by the University of Guananto in Mexico.

Marc worked for the AP in Denver, Little Rock, Chicago, Boise (as correspondent), and Dallas (as ACOB) from 1973 to 1982.

He is the co-founder and executive chairman of TownNews.com.

Carl Leubsdorf's annual predictions column

By Carl P. Leubsdorf ([Email](#))

After a unique 2017, can the denizens of the D.C. swamp outdo themselves in 2018? Let's look ahead with my annual not-totally-serious forecast:

January: With job approval at 38, President Donald Trump announces White House shake-up, naming Gen. John Kelly chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff and, with Middle East negotiations moribund, son-in-law Jared Kushner as chief of staff. Former Minnesota Sen. Al Franken rejoins cast of "Saturday Night Live." In State of the Union speech, Trump hails "most successful first year of any president," asking Congress to repeal Obamacare, rebuild nation's infrastructure, fund the wall and stop trying to sanction "our friends" in Russia.

February: New Orleans Saints win Super Bowl. Independent Counsel Robert Mueller announces perjury indictment of Kushner, charging multiple incorrect statements in federal filings. Communications Director Hope Hicks becomes chief of staff. Attorney General Jeff Sessions appoints Ken Starr as Special Counsel to investigate the role of Hillary and Bill Clinton in selling U.S. uranium sites to Russian governmental company. South Korea calls off Winter Olympics after U.S. withdraws team, warning of "imminent" North Korean attack. Trump job approval at 35.

March: Russian President Vladimir Putin names Washington Capitals hockey star Alexander Ovechkin as new Russian ambassador to U.S. Trump says if he were Russian, he'd vote for Putin. House Freedom Caucus refuses to support reinstatement of DACA, so Democrats refuse to support government funding bill, forcing federal shutdown. Dallas Sheriff Lupe Valdez edges Andrew White as Texas Democratic nominee for governor. Putin wins re-election with 93 per cent. "A landslide just like mine," Trump says. Federal judge throws out Starr appointment to probe Clintons and uranium deal, citing statute of limitations.

April: Hope Hicks indicted for misleading statements to congressional committee; Donald Trump Jr. becomes chief of staff. House Speaker Paul Ryan says he won't seek re-election. After 22-day shutdown, Congress approves funding bill restoring DACA and planning funds for Trump's wall. North Korean missile lands near Hawaii. Trump warns of "serious consequences" if they don't abandon nuclear weapons. Buckingham Palace invites former President and Mrs. Obama to Prince Harry's wedding. Trump, not invited, cancels planned trip to London.

May: House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi announces next term will be her last. Senate rejects new bill repealing Obamacare, 51-49. Russian troops invade Ukraine; Trump, Putin blame Ukrainian provocation. Former Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort convicted of seven counts and sentenced to 50 years in jail. Justice Anthony Kennedy announces he will remain on Supreme Court at least one more year. North Korea missile lands near Samoa; Trump issues strong warning.

June: Independent Counsel Mueller brings perjury charges against Donald Trump Jr. Kellyanne Conway becomes year's fifth chief of staff. Golden State beats Washington Wizards in NBA final. Expansion Vegas Golden Knights edge Washington Capitals in NHL final. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson resigns, replaced by Sen. Bob Corker. Unemployment drops to 3.9 percent.

July: House includes wall funds in appropriations bill. Trump accuses Supreme Court Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer of plotting to keep him from naming new justices by staying alive. Russian President Putin hails "my friend, Donald," on Trump state visit to Moscow. President's job approval drops to 30.

August: Trump says the reports that many Republicans don't want him campaigning for them are "fake news." Conway fires Press Secretary Sarah Sanders after she is revealed as source for New York Times story about Trump's true golf scores. Independent Counsel Mueller accuses Green Party leader Jill Stein of colluding with Russia and Trump campaign to drain off Democratic votes.

September: Trump says "important government business" will limit his mid-term campaigning. Ex-Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander announces presidential candidacy on his 12th trip to Iowa, joining Maryland Rep. John Delaney as formal Democratic candidates. Polls show Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders lead race with 12

and 10 per cent. Senate rejects wall funding. Hopelessly deadlocked, Congress passes interim funding measure until January.

October: Democrats say priority if they win Congress will be infrastructure spending; Trump says that is really code for impeaching him. President announces "surge" of government revenues from tax cut will reduce federal deficit to \$750 billion. Poll shows only 34 per cent believe him. New York Yankees win World Series over Washington Nationals. Trump says all Washington teams are "losers."

November: Democratic tsunami recaptures House, Senate and Florida, Michigan, Illinois and Ohio governorships. Trump blames Ryan and Mitch McConnell. Texas Gov. Glenn Abbott and Sen. Ted Cruz re-elected, but GOP loses three Texas House seats. House GOP ousts entire leadership, picking Freedom Caucus chair Rep. Mark Meadows as leader. Senate GOP replaces McConnell with Texas Sen. John Cornyn.

December: Mueller's final report accuses President Trump of two counts of obstruction of justice but, despite "clear evidence" of Russian influence, finds no specific law violation in Putin's ties with Trump 2016 campaign. Lame-duck GOP-controlled House Judiciary Committee approves impeachment resolution against Hillary Clinton. Twenty-seven Democrats announce intention to seek presidency in 2020.

Final goodbye: Roll call of some who died in 2017



Legendary U.S. rock and roll singer and guitarist Chuck Berry performs in Burgos, Spain in 2007. Rock 'n' roll founding father Berry was among the notable figures who died in 2017. (AP Photo/Israel Lopez Murillo, File)

By BERNARD McGHEE

The Associated Press

They made music that inspired legions of fans.

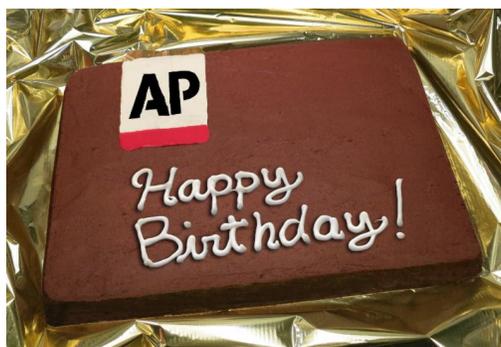
Rock 'n' roll founding fathers Chuck Berry and Fats Domino, rockers Tom Petty and Gregg Allman, grunge icon Chris Cornell, country superstar Glen Campbell and jazz great Al Jarreau were among the notable figures who died in 2017, leaving a void in virtually every genre of music.

Comedians Jerry Lewis, Don Rickles and Dick Gregory left their own indelible mark with their iconic routines. And the story of the 1960s could not be told without Hugh Hefner and Charles Manson, who were synonymous with the decade in vastly different ways.

Hefner founded Playboy magazine and was credited with helping rev up the sexual revolution in the 1960s. The decade ended with Manson becoming the face of evil across America by orchestrating seven murders that marked the end of the era of peace and love.

Read more [here](#). Shared by David Scott.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Arlon Southall - arlonsouthall@aol.com

On Saturday...

Rick Plumlee - rickplumlee48@gmail.com

On Sunday...

Don Dashiell - lakehaven5@bellsouth.net

On Monday...

Jim Carlson - jcarlson1657@sbcglobal.net

Today in History - December 29, 2017



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Dec. 29, the 363rd day of 2017. There are two days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 29, 1170, Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was slain in Canterbury Cathedral by knights loyal to King Henry II.

On this date:

In 1808, the 17th president of the United States, Andrew Johnson, was born in Raleigh, North Carolina.

In 1845, Texas was admitted as the 28th state.

In 1890, the Wounded Knee massacre took place in South Dakota as an estimated 300 Sioux Indians were killed by U.S. troops sent to disarm them.

In 1916, James Joyce's first novel, "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," was first published in book form in New York after being serialized in London.

In 1934, Japan formally renounced the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922.

In 1940, during World War II, Germany dropped incendiary bombs on London, setting off what came to be known as "The Second Great Fire of London."

In 1957, singers Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme were married in Las Vegas (the marriage lasted until Gorme's death in 2013).

In 1967, Hyundai Motor Co. was founded in Seoul (sohl), South Korea.

In 1972, Eastern Air Lines Flight 401, a Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, crashed into the Florida Everglades near Miami International Airport, killing 101 of the 176 people aboard.

In 1975, a bomb exploded in the main terminal of New York's LaGuardia Airport, killing 11 people (it's never been determined who was responsible).

In 1986, former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan died in Sussex, England, at age 92.

In 1992, David and Sharon Schoo of St. Charles, Illinois, were arrested at O'Hare International Airport upon their return from a Mexican vacation for leaving their 4- and 9-year-old daughters at home, alone. (The Schoos pleaded guilty to child neglect and were sentenced to probation; the children were put up for adoption.)

Ten years ago: Australian David Hicks, who'd fought alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan, was freed from prison in Adelaide after completing a nine-month sentence struck under a plea deal that followed more than five years' detention without a trial at Guantanamo. The New England Patriots ended their regular season with a remarkable 16-0 record following a 38-35 comeback victory over the New York Giants. (New England became the first NFL team since the 1972 Dolphins to win every game on the schedule.)

Five years ago: Maine's same-sex marriage law went into effect. Shocked Indians mourned the death of a woman who'd been gang-raped and beaten on a bus in New Delhi nearly two weeks earlier; six suspects were charged with murder. (Four were later sentenced to death; one died in prison; the sixth, a juvenile at the time of the attack, was sentenced to a maximum of three years in a reform home.)

One year ago: The United States struck back at Russia for hacking the U.S. presidential campaign with a sweeping set of punishments targeting Russia's spy agencies and diplomats; Moscow called the Obama administration "losers" and threatened retaliation. Tennis star Serena Williams announced her engagement to Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian - on Reddit. (The couple married on Nov. 16, 2017.)

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Rose Lee Maphis is 95. Actress Inga Swenson is 85. ABC newscaster Tom Jarriel is 83. Actress Barbara Steele is 80. Actor Jon Voight is 79. Country singer Ed Bruce is 78. Rock musician Ray Thomas is 76. Singer Marianne Faithfull is 71. Hall of Fame Jockey Laffit Pincay Jr. is 71. Actor Ted Danson is 70. Singer-actress Yvonne Elliman is 66. The president of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, is 64. Actress Patricia Clarkson is 58. Comedian Paula Poundstone is 58. Rock singer-musician Jim Reid (The Jesus and Mary Chain) is 56. Actor Michael Cudlitz is 53. Rock singer Dexter Holland (The Offspring) is 52. Actor-comedian Mysterio Clark is 51. Actor Jason Gould is 51. News anchor Ashleigh Banfield is 50. Movie director Lilly Wachowski is 50. Actress Jennifer Ehle is 48. Actor Patrick Fischler is 48. Rock singer-musician Glen Phillips is 47. Actor Kevin Weisman is 47. Actor Jude Law is 45. Actress Maria Dizzia is 43. Actor Mekhi Phifer (mih-KY' FY'-fuhr) is 43. Actor Shawn Hatosy is 42. Actress Katherine Moennig is 40. Actor Diego Luna is 38. Actress Alison Brie is 35. Country singer Jessica Andrews is 34. Actor Iain de Caestecker is 30. Actress Jane Levy is 28. Singer-actor-dancer Ross Lynch is 22.

Thought for Today: "The wise man must be wise before, not after." - Epicharmus (eh-pih-KAHR'-muhs), Sicilian Greek comic poet.

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.

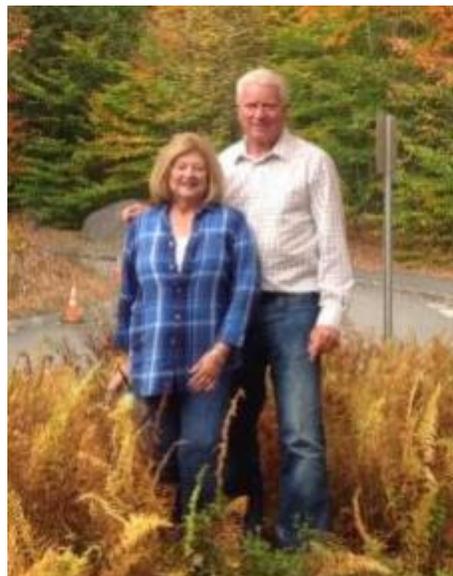
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **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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