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Connecting - January 02, 2018

1 message

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Connecting

January 02, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning!

Here is the first edition of Connecting in the new year, 2018.

Chris Connell's wonderful profile of now-retired AP Washington newsman **Merrill Hartson** in last Friday's issue reminds me to remind you that if you have an idea for a similar profile, drop me a note.

There are many of you in our readership with fascinating careers and lives, and they ought to be told. Make it one of your New Year's resolutions.

Our Connecting readership grew by 101 people in the past year from 1,157 to 1,258 - almost all of the additions by word of mouth. Thank you for spreading the word. If you're new to the rolls, I hope you take an active part in 2018 by sharing your memories and stories you find of interest.

I look forward to our association in 2018 - and lots of full Mailboxes - in the coming year.

Meanwhile, as a professor of mine was known to say, Peace.

Paul

Lindel Hutson's daughter Sarah a contestant on Food Network's 'Chopped' tonight

Lindel Hutson ([Email](#)) - My daughter Sarah Wade is a contestant tonight at 9 pm Central Time on the Food Network show Chopped.

It's a popular show among Food Network devotees. But a new experience for me since most of my time is spent watch sports or news.

Sarah is general manager and head chef of a Boston eatery, Lulu's of Allston.

She has spent many years working in the restaurant industry, after graduating from Oklahoma State University's Hotel and Restaurant management school.



She was the school's outstanding graduate and could have gone into any field she wanted. During high school, she worked in a local coffee shop and enjoyed the work and the people so becoming a chef was top priority.

After graduation she spent many years with the Marriott corporation in Houston, Charlotte back to Houston and then with Hyatt Regency in Greenwich, CT before moving to Boston.

Ironically, Jan. 2 also is her birthday and this gives me the opportunity to throw one more accolade to Myron Belkind, who has been the subject of many Connecting testimonials.

When Sarah was 16 she was on a band trip to London for that city's Festival Parade. Myron was AP chief of bureau in London and I had emailed Myron that she was coming and to watch for her if he attended the parade.

He went above and beyond. On Jan. 2, her birthday, she was called to the lobby of the band group's hotel. There, Myron presented her with a birthday cake. She was completely surprised and called home breathless: ``You won't believe what just happened...''

I think anyone who knows Myron shouldn't be surprised.

She's competing with two other chefs for Chopped prize money.

And thanks again, Myron, after all these years.

New Year's Day sparks memories of AP preparations for Y2K

John Kuglin (Email) - The Associated Press went on high alert near the end of 1999. As the world prepared to move into the new millennium, there was widespread panic that the Y2K computer bug would shut down computer networks, power plants, banking systems, electrical transmission lines and communication networks.

AP chiefs of bureau and communications were ordered to their bureaus to join the staff for all-night vigils, and to provide backup power as the countdown began for the year 2000.

In Helena, our industrious and resourceful COC Bill Pratt bought a gasoline powered generator with enough juice to run some lights and computers.

The start of the new millennium was mostly a real yawner around the world until a faithful Montana AP stringer named George Ostrum from KOFI-Radio called our bureau to dictate a shocking story.

It had been a wild New Year's Eve, as usual, in the small ski town of Whitefish in the northwestern corner of the state. Everybody reportedly was having a very good time, including hundreds of Canadian visitors drinking mostly rye whiskey.



Only 15 minutes into the new millennium, four young women wearing only boots or shoes ran naked through the snow down the town's main street.

The cops tried to arrest the women. But they soon withdrew after an angry, liquored-up mob estimated at more than 400 partiers poured into the streets from the numerous bars to cheer on the streakers.

Cops were pelted with snowballs, rocks, bottles and fireworks. The window of a police car was broken and someone threw an M-80 giant firecracker into the grill of another cop car. Two officers were slightly injured.

Three of the women were eventually arrested for indecent exposure, along with 12 of the rioters after reinforcements arrived from the sheriff's department, state troopers and even the U.S. Border Patrol and railroad police. The AP later reported that "police said they had a good description of the fourth woman."

When I heard the news, I said, "Thank you God! Call the General Desk."

The sensational news from Whitefish led the AP's A-wire millennium roundups for several cycles. Our bureau received dozens of phone calls from the news media around the country. One caller asked about the quickest way to get to Whitefish. We replied that there wasn't one.

Whitefish was again in the news last year as the home of Interior Secretary Brian Zinke and the headquarters of a two-person firm that inked a short-lived \$300 million contract to rebuild Puerto Rico's power grid.

In addition to a world class ski area, Whitefish is perhaps best known for its fur-bearing trout. The insulated fish receive almost as much notoriety as Wyoming's jackalopes, the result of mating between jackrabbits and antelope.

If you are skeptical that there are fur-bearing trout, you can find them mounted on the walls of some of the leading bars in Whitefish, as well as in the local museum. Sadly, no one has caught a fur-bearing trout for years. It is believed that they were caught to extinction for their prized little pelts.

Connecting mailbox

On the newly retired Merrill Hartson

Larry Margasak ([Email](#)) - Merrill and I came to the Washington Bureau together in 1977. The difference between Merrill and the rest of us: He ended up working every possible job by the time he retired this past week. He has truly been the indispensable staffer and manager, the person you could always count on to play any position and do it well. I'm glad I retired before Merrill. I couldn't imagine working in the bureau without him.

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Who made that call to The Desert Sun on death of Sonny Bono?

Howard Goldberg ([Email](#)) - Twenty years ago this week, pop singer turned politician Sonny Bono went skiing near Lake Tahoe, hit a tree and died on Jan. 5. I

remember dealing with the breaking news as an editor on what was then called the AP General Desk in New York. But I didn't know how Rep. Bono's local newspaper got the news until recently.

The Desert Sun in Palm Springs is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year and invited local residents to an open house on Dec. 6. As a former AP bureau chief now living in Palm Springs, I couldn't pass up a newspaper visit, so I attended and got in line for a newsroom tour. Larry Bohannon, the Desert Sun's longtime golf and outdoors writer, played tour guide and led us first into the pressroom. After explaining how the Gannett-owned newspaper now prints tons of regional and national newspapers and ad circulars to make up for its own lost circulation revenue, he asked if there were any questions. Of course, a former AP newsman asked the first question, and it was predictable: When is your press start and how late can you really go if there's big, breaking news?



That question led Bohannon to explain how rare it is to "Stop the presses!" or even delay a press start. He recalled that it was 20 years ago that the paper really delayed a press start, and only because a call from AP alerted the Desert Sun of an upcoming story reporting its district's congressman had been killed. Bono, who was elected to Congress in 1994 after serving as Palm Springs mayor, was 62.

With Bono's celebrity and his former wife Cher speaking tearfully at his funeral, the death was the kind of story that a local newspaper would be embarrassed to have been catching up on. So, dear Connecting readers, who wants to take credit for making that extremely helpful member call?

(Howard Goldberg worked for AP for 29 years, mostly in New York City.)

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From Tucson to Storm Lake, Iowa - a nearly 100-degree temperature difference!



Sunrise revealed waves of wind-driven powdery snow covering the ice at Storm Lake, Iowa.

Mark Mittelstadt (Email) - Mark visited his parents Marilyn and Ray Mittelstadt for several days after Christmas at their home in Storm Lake, Iowa. Coming up from Tucson he had to find a warm coat for the sub-zero temperatures of Northwest Iowa. He returned home New Year's Day.



Temps were in the low single digits during the day, dropping below zero,

falling during the week, and the thermometer showed -20 Sunday morning when he left. Shoveled snow a couple mornings for old times' sake! Temps in Tucson were 78-79

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Connecting sky shot - Sardinia, Italy



Shared by Kevin Walsh.

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Scholarships in honor of his late wife at Columbia, Hong Kong universities

Arnold Zeitlin ([Email](#)) - For more than 16 years, our family has supported small scholarships in memory of my late wife, Vicky Shek Zeitlin, at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and at the Journalism & Media Studies Centre at the University of Hong Kong. The scholarship at Columbia is for Asian students; the one at Hong Kong University is for Chinese mainlanders.

I am marking my 86th year next month, so I am humbly suggesting donations of \$86 (or a multiple of that figure, \$860?) to the Vicky Shek Zeitlin Memorial Scholarships at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and/or at the Journalism & Media Studies Centre at Hong Kong University.

To contribute online to the Columbia fund:

- * go to <https://journalism.givenow.columbia.edu/#>
- * Enter the amount of the contribution (\$26, \$86, \$860?, etc)
- * In the box asking if the donation is in "honor of or in memory of" anyone, click "Zeitlin Memorial Scholarship Fund" (there isn't room to write more). presumably that will direct the money to the scholarship fund.
- * Continue on to contact and payment information.

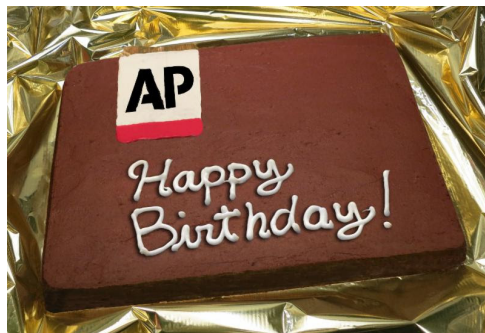
For the Hong Kong University contribution, send checks payable to "Friends of the University of Hong Kong" to Mrs. Monica Yeung, executive director, Friends of the University of Hong Kong, [1321 Sydney Drive, Sunnyvale Ca 94087](#), Email: usfriend@hku.hk. Make sure you designate the contribution to the Vicky Shek Zeitlin Memorial Scholarship at the Journalism Centre.

Of course, checks designated for the Vicky fund can be sent to Columbia, too, (see the address online) and smaller contributions would be deeply appreciated.

Contributions to Columbia and to the Friends of the University of Hong Kong, a US 501 (c) (3) charitable organization under the IRS code, are tax deductible.

Merry Christmas to those who celebrated (as well as those who don't but still enjoyed the holiday spirit) and a happy new year to all,

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

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Phil Sandlin - psandlin@hotmail.com

Welcome to Connecting



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Stories of interest

Saving the Free Press From Private Equity

(American Prospect)

By Robert Kuttner & Hildy Zenger

There is a standard story about the death of newspapers. After decades of enjoying easy profits from print ad income, publishers were blindsided by the internet revolution. Free information on the web cut into their core audience, especially

among the young. The expenses of paper, printing, and delivery - "trucks and trees"- made them increasingly uncompetitive in a digital age. Publishers were slow to adjust. By the time owners figured out how to monetize web content, Google and Facebook had gotten there first, and were taking an estimated 80 percent of digital ad revenues. The crash of 2008 only hastened the decline.

A few national newspapers with unique franchises-The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The Washington Post-have begun to figure out the digital transition, using paywalls, new digital content, and complementary business strategies to realize income from other sources. They will survive, even thrive.

But the real tragedy for the civic commons is occurring at the level of regional papers. Local dailies and weeklies are in a slow death spiral. They missed the digital rendezvous. Operating losses cause owners to lay off staff and shrink content, further depressing readership and ad income, leaving little to reinvest in digital. Local web-only media are feisty in a few places, but no substitute for a robust newspaper, whether print, web, or a blend.

Read more [here](#). Shared by John Montgomery.

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Vietnam combat cameraman's Medal of Honor displayed at Smithsonian (artdaily)



WASHINGTON, DC.- The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History is displaying the only Medal of Honor to be awarded to a combat photographer in the Medal of Honor Gallery of the "Price of Freedom" exhibition.

Marine Cpl. William Thomas Perkins Jr. died at the age of 20 when he flung himself on a grenade to preserve the lives of three other Marines during Operation Medina, a Marine search and destroy operation in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam, Oct. 12, 1967. The Marine Corps posthumously awarded him the Medal of Honor for "his gallant actions."

His mother, Marilane Perkins Jacobson of Lexington, Ky., donated the medal, her son's letters and other personal effects to the museum's permanent Armed Forces Collections in 2015. Museum Advisory Board member Jeff Garrett, also of Lexington, assisted with the acquisition.

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

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California Today: A Union Battle at an Anti-Union Bastion (New York Times)

By Adam Nagourney

The Los Angeles Times has been a bulwark against union organizing for more than a century, since Gen. Harrison Gray Otis acquired part-ownership of the company in 1884 - helping to shape not only a powerful newspaper but Los Angeles itself. Two union organizers set off a bomb at the paper's downtown headquarters in 1910, killing 20 people, a bloody event that is integral to the paper's history.

The newspaper stayed in the Otis-Chandler family until The Tribune Company took control in 2000. Now, with the paper controlled by Tronc, which is based in Chicago, what once seemed unthinkable is about to happen: The newsroom is going to vote next week on whether to join The NewsGuild, which represents 25,000 reporters, editors and photographers across the nation.

"Anyone who knows the history of Los Angeles knows what a big deal this is," said Matt Pearce, a national correspondent with the paper and a member of the organizing committee. "General Otis must be rolling over in his grave."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Michael Rubin, who added, "Of interest to watch this drama at the LA Times. The word 'union' was enough to cause shivers and hives at the Times for decades. I owe a special thanks to the paper since I was a political sci major aiming for law school when the Times hired me as a copy boy and I wound up as a news clerk, promoted to the sports department. My major shifted to journalism and I worked full time at the paper my last two years at Cal State Los Angeles."

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Santa Barbara newspaper with history of controversy apologizes after byline includes anti-gay slur (LA Times)

By Joseph Serna

A newspaper that's no stranger to controversy found itself in hot water with readers this week after an employee changed a reporter's byline to include an anti-gay slur in its Christmas Day issue.

The Santa Barbara News-Press ran a story from staff writer Paul Gonzales on Monday about last-minute Christmas shoppers. Online, his byline is accurate and identifies him as a News-Press writer.

But readers who picked up a print copy of the paper saw his name printed as "Paul Gayzalez" and his title doctored to include an anti-gay slur.

Readers quickly noticed and posted images on social media. Some called for the paper's executives to be fired, along with the employee responsible.

Read more [here](#). Shared by John Brewer, who added, "Unbelievable that this could have made it into print. Although the story doesn't say it, I'll bet this could have been prevented with a full copy desk and slot person."

The Final Word

Belgium Ends Telegram Service After 171 Years (Smithsonian)



By Jason Daley

The electric telegraph kick-started the world-changing electric communication age, which ultimately led to the telephone, satellite communication, email, even, arguably, the poop emoji. Now, after 171 years, that venerable old system is coming to an end in Belgium. Proximus, the state-owned company running Belgium's last telegram service, cuts the line tomorrow, reports James Crisp of, appropriately enough, The Telegraph.

The reason has to do with traffic. In the first 11 months of 2017, only 8,000 telegrams were sent, most by ten regular business users and a smattering of residential customers, according to a press release from Proximus. Once upon a time, telegraphs were the best way to communicate news-good and bad-quickly across great distances. Today, the medium's remaining users mostly consist of lawyers or bailiffs who require legal proof of a message's receipt. To give you an idea of how steep the decline has been in the last few decades, Proximus explains that in the early 1980s, it sent about 1.5 million telegrams per year. By 2010, that number had dropped to about 50,000.

The end of Belgian telegrams isn't the end of the service across the world, but it's getting close. Britain ditched telegrams in 1982, the United States sent its last in 2006 and India, which long-relied on telegrams for internal government communications, tossed its last message in the bin in 2013.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Libby Quaid.

Today in History - January 2, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 2, the second day of 2018. There are 363 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 2, 1893, the U.S. Postal Service issued its first-ever set of commemorative stamps to honor the upcoming World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago as well as the quadricentennial of Christopher Columbus' voyage.

On this date:

In 1788, Georgia became the fourth state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1792, the first classes began at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

In 1900, U.S. Secretary of State John Hay announced the "Open Door Policy" to facilitate trade with China.

In 1921, religious services were broadcast on radio for the first time as KDKA in Pittsburgh aired the regular Sunday service of the city's Calvary Episcopal Church.

In 1935, Bruno Hauptmann went on trial in Flemington, New Jersey, on charges of kidnapping and murdering the 20-month-old son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh. (Hauptmann was found guilty, and executed.)

In 1942, the Philippine capital of Manila was captured by Japanese forces during World War II.

In 1955, the president of Panama, Jose Antonio Remon Cantera, was assassinated at a racetrack.

In 1967, Republican Ronald Reagan took the oath of office as the new governor of California in a ceremony that took place in Sacramento shortly just after midnight.

In 1974, President Richard Nixon signed legislation requiring states to limit highway speeds to 55 miles an hour as a way of conserving gasoline in the face of an OPEC oil embargo. (The 55 mph limit was effectively phased out in 1987; federal speed limits were abolished in 1995.) "Singing cowboy" star Tex Ritter died in Nashville at age 68.

In 1983, the original Broadway production of the musical "Annie" closed after a run of 2,377 performances.

In 1991, Sharon Pratt was sworn in as mayor of Washington, D.C., becoming the first black woman to head a city of Washington's size and prominence.

In 2006, a methane gas explosion at the Sago (SAY'-goh) Mine in West Virginia claimed the lives of 12 miners, but one miner, Randal McCloy, Jr., was eventually rescued. The roof of a skating rink collapsed in the German town of Bad Reichenhall (bahd RYK'-ehn-hahl), killing 15 people.

Ten years ago: The Justice Department opened a full criminal investigation into the destruction of CIA videotapes of the interrogation of two al-Qaida suspects. (A special prosecutor later cleared the CIA's former top clandestine officer and others.) Oil prices soared to \$100 a barrel for the first time. Late-night talk shows returned to the air two months into a writers strike. (David Letterman and Craig Ferguson had

reached agreements to allow writers to work on their shows; Jay Leno, Conan O'Brien and ABC's Jimmy Kimmel returned without theirs.)

Five years ago: The United Nations gave a grim new count of the human cost of Syria's civil war, saying the death toll had exceeded 60,000 in 21 months. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton left a New York hospital, three days after doctors discovered a blood clot in her head. No. 22 Louisville toppled No. 4 Florida, 33-23, in the Sugar Bowl.

One year ago: A suicide bomber driving a pickup loaded with explosives struck a bustling market in Baghdad, killing at least 36 people in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group hours after French President Francois Hollande (frahn-SWAH' oh-LAWND') arrived in the Iraqi capital. No. 9 Southern California rallied from a 14-point deficit in the fourth quarter for a spectacular 52-49 victory over No. 5 Penn State in the Rose Bowl.

Today's Birthdays: Country musician Harold Bradley is 92. Former House Speaker Dennis Hastert is 76. TV host Jack Hanna is 71. Actress Wendy Phillips is 66. Actress Cynthia Sikes is 64. Actress Gabrielle Carteris is 57. Movie director Todd Haynes is 57. Retired MLB All-Star pitcher David Cone is 55. Actress Tia Carrere is 51. Actor Cuba Gooding Jr. is 50. Model Christy Turlington is 49. Actor Taye Diggs is 47. Actress Renee Elise Goldsberry is 47. Rock musician Scott Underwood is 47. Rock singer Doug Robb (Hoobastank) is 43. Actor Dax Shepard is 43. Actress Paz Vega is 42. Country musician Chris Hartman is 40. Ballroom dancer Karina Smirnoff (TV: "Dancing with the Stars") is 40. Rock musician Jerry DePizzo Jr. (O.A.R.) is 39. Rhythm-and-blues singer Kelton Kessee (IMX) is 37. Pop singer-musician Ryan Merchant (Capital Cities) is 37. Actress Kate Bosworth is 35. Actor Peter Gadiot is 33. Jazz singer-musician Trombone Shorty is 32. Singer-songwriter Mandy Harvey (TV: "America's Got Talent") is 30. Rhythm-and-blues singer-rapper Bryson Tiller is 25.

Thought for Today: "It is good to have an end to journey towards; but it is the journey that matters, in the end." - Ursula K. Le Guin, American author.

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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