



Paul Shane <pjshane@gmail.com>

Connecting -- August 15, 2018

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

Wed, Aug 15, 2018 at 9:32 AM

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Connecting

August 15, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning!

Connecting colleague **Paul Colford** ([Email](#)) shares this report on a photo exhibit, "Austin Tice: Children of Syria", held Tuesday night at the National Press Club in Washington on the sixth-year anniversary of Tice's abduction while reporting the war in Syria. His parents express confidence he is alive and remains a captive somewhere in Syria, entangled in the war.

Colford's report:

Viewing the livestream from the air-conditioned comfort of my apartment, I was struck by the firm resolve of all the speakers at The National Press Club to bring Austin home, undaunted that six long years have passed since his capture.



"Yes, Austin's story is still news," McClatchy Vice President for News Tim Grieve told the gathering. "We owe it to Austin and his family to keep telling his story, we owe it to all the journalists who put themselves at risk to do their jobs overseas and, increasingly, right here at home."

McClatchy has raised #FreeAustinTice flags and banners across its 30 newsrooms around the country.

<https://twitter.com/mcclatchy/status/1029502399579410433?s=21>

Tice, 37, a freelance journalist with a number of impressive awards to his credit, including a George Polk Award for Syria coverage won by McClatchy in 2013, also contributed copy and photos to The Washington Post, whose publisher, Fred Ryan, spoke last night as well.

An exhibit of Tice's images from Syria is on display at the Press Club through August.

Margaux Ewen, executive director of Reporters Without Borders, North America, said 192 professional journalists, citizen journalists and media workers have been killed in Syria during the past six years, making it one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists.

She called for donations to the Fund to Support Families of American Journalists Missing, Imprisoned or Held Hostage. [Click here](#) to view. The fund was created in 2016, after Jason Rezaian, the Washington Post bureau chief in Tehran, had spent 18 months imprisoned in Iran.

Other useful links ...

Last night's program at The National Press Club ran about a half-hour. You can click and replay the presentation, including remarks by Tice's parents, Debra and Marc, by going [here](#).

One more link ... Austin Tice's [family web site](#).

Today's issue brings you an engaging remembrance by longtime newspaperman **Bill Brown** as he recalls the sights, sounds, and heart that made up pretty much any newsroom across the country back then.

Have a good day.

Paul

A long love affair with newspapering



Bill Brown (center), executive editor, with staff of the Alabama Journal when it won the Pulitzer Prize in 1988 for General News Reporting.

By BILL BROWN (Email)

On August 20, 1962, three days after graduating from LSU, I walked into the newsroom of the St. Petersburg Times and a lifelong affection for newsrooms. I was fortunate enough to retire from the Montgomery Advertiser when its newsroom, for the most part, bore a close resemblance to that first newsroom. Nostalgia welled up as I saw the newsroom in the recent movie "The Post," and it was strengthened with a clipping from Cousin Tom about the Baltimore Sun's move from its old building. The world changes, and in the future some will recall fondly the news rooms-if you can call them that-of today, cold, quiet places, devoid of character, and most likely characters. I am glad I am not one of those people.

I loved newsrooms with overflowing ash trays and cups half full of cold coffee. I loved copy paper cut from sheets of newsprint and the manual typewriters that stuttered when you pressed the space bar and whose keys were so worn they didn't print an entire letter. I loved false starts at stories landing in a wad somewhere near a wastebasket.

I loved slapping rubber cement on the bottom of a page of a copy and pasting the next page to it so the story became one long string. I loved watching the copy boys

(copy clerks after we got enlightened) filling the paste pots every night from gallon tins of rubber cement and adding bits of the thickened cement they had removed from the pots to the giant ball they had fashioned.

I loved the old furniture that could not be further diminished by spilled coffee or a cigarette burn or muddy shoes resting atop it. (For a long time I suspected that there must be factories that reassembled used typewriters and desks especially for newspapers. I never saw a new typewriter in a newsroom until the brief occupation by electric typewriters in the vanguard of the electronic age. New desks came along when computers demanded more up to date surroundings than reporters ever did.

I loved hearing jangling bells in the wire room when an important story was moving and watching the copy boys tear stories from the machines and deliver them to the wire desk. I loved watching the copy editors, who always seemed old and cynical and who were Google before there was Google, assemble stories from two or three different wire services into a coherent whole.

I loved the switchboard operators who could soothe an angry reader or customer before they were connected to the object of their ire. The same switchboard operators could track down a staff reporter on an out-of-town assignment even if you didn't know where they were staying or exactly who they were seeing.

I loved the reporters, irreverent members of a brotherhood who considered low pay and long hours a small price to pay for doing something they loved and that they thought was important. They did not go into journalism-they would never refer to themselves by the highbrow term journalist-to get rich or famous or to be popular; they regarded someone who treated them as if they were charming or sagacious as likely to want something.

I loved the veteran reporters who were the institutional memory and who instinctively knew which rookies were going to make it and took them under their wings. I loved the characters who could be irascible and temperamental but who were terriers at heart, who loved nothing more than digging out information that somebody wanted to suppress.

I loved going into the office every day knowing that plans were subject to change and that I might spend the night in a grove watching oranges freeze or an afternoon interviewing the marshal of the Royal Air Force.

I loved being married to a woman who learned early on that a telephone call saying I was about to walk out of the door didn't mean I would get all the way out the door and not to put dinner on until I actually arrived. I loved that she never complained when the news muscled aside our plans for dinner or a movie.

And when I became an editor, I loved being able to make decisions about what we covered and how we displayed it without consulting a check list "experts" somewhere had devised. I loved being an editor who had a publisher on the scene to answer to and not a corporate vice president hundreds of miles away looking over my shoulder.

I was lucky.

Bill (William Blake) Brown grew up in Louisiana and graduated with a degree in journalism from LSU in August 1962. He began his newspaper career at the St. Petersburg Times. He also served as state editor and city editor of the Times. He was executive city editor and assistant managing editor of the Tallahassee Democrat, managing editor of the Columbus Enquirer and executive editor of the Columbus Ledger and Enquirer, managing editor of the Montgomery Advertiser and executive editor of the Advertiser and the Alabama Journal. He was a professional journalism fellow at Stanford University and is recipient of a lifetime achievement award from the Alabama Press Association. Newspapers he edited won a number of national awards, including APME Freedom of Information and Public Service Awards, a Pulitzer Prize and a National Headliners Award.

(Shared by Ed Williams)

Recalling more of your favorite datelines

Adolphe Bernotas ([Email](#)) - My favorite location is Cowshit Corner, a village in Newcastle, Maine. I first came across it as I was pedaling on Route 194, nearing the end of a bike ride from Anacortes, Wash., to Bar Harbor, Maine, a million years ago.

Googling it shows a website and social media sites dedicated to Cowshit Corner. This is from one of those sites.



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Bob Daugherty (Email) - Buzzard Roost, Ky was one of the most colorful datelines I remember.

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John Epperson (Email) - Actually covered a story, a multi-fatality plane incident in Chugwater, Wyoming. Who can possibly not head out to popular tourist, artist and casino spot, French Lick, Indiana.

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Joe Galu (Email) - Paul Harvey reported on a situation, I believe from Illinois, involving communities named Normal and Oval. The headline was Normal Man to Wed Oval Woman. Not bad.

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Lindel Hutson (Email) - SLAPOUT, Okla.

It is nothing but a convenience store in the Oklahoma panhandle just north of Texas and a few prairie dog towns south of Kansas. However, it is listed on the state highway map and has its own Wikipedia page (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slapout,_Oklahoma).

Many travelers along US 412 stop so they can get their picture made under the Slapout sign.

The prevailing wisdom has it so named because it is "slap out in the middle of nowhere." Which it is. Wikipedia, however, says the name historically comes from being a convenience store which was often "slap out" of whatever you needed.

Slapout is in Beaver County, population less than 6,000, so named because of the many beaver dams along the Beaver River.

In my exhaustive research for this, I also discovered that Alabama at one time claimed a place named SlapOut.

And then there is Retrop, Okla. Named, as I understand, because settlers wanted to honor some guy named Porter. But the postal service (or maybe Pony Express) wouldn't allow that because Oklahoma already had a town named Porter. So they spelled the name backward, and it stuck. Now nothing exists but a historic marker, but it is listed on the state highway map.

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Craig Klugman (Email) - Speaking of the manly man headline, I suspect it is an urban legend. I say that because there was this supposed headline that was widely talked about in upper Midwest journalism circles regarding a small-town married couple who had the misfortune to be in a car accident out of town:

Fertile couple

dies in Climax

Fertile and Climax are small cities in Polk County, Minnesota, up around Grand Forks, North Dakota.

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Martha Malan (Email) - The Minnesota version of Steve Graham's dateline contribution:

Fertile Woman

Dies in Climax

(There's also Embarrass, but we couldn't find a way to make it work.)

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Jay Reeves (Email) - I've written stories from both Smuteye, Alabama, and Slapout, Alabama. Neither is near Bug Tussle, Alabama, where I hope to someday have a byline.

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John Rogers (Email) - All of these odd and peculiar town names suddenly reminded me of a story I did in 1998 on a guy from Nevada, Mo., who did a book called "Odd & Peculiar" that included dozens of funny town names. The title was taken from Odd, West Virginia, and Peculiar, Missouri. I may still have the book buried away somewhere at home. The last I spoke to the author, a retired minister named Neal Swanson, he was working on a sequel. He was nearly 80 then so I doubt he's still with us.

Also, you may recall that Ozarks novelist Suzann Ledbetter wrote a series of detective novels featuring amateur sleuth Hannah Garvey and her police officer boyfriend. The titles of the books were taken from funny names of Missouri towns where the action was generally set. Some of them were "Halfway to Halfway," "West of Bliss," "North of Clever" and "East of Peculiar." I think they're still in print.

I only read "East of Peculiar" but it was very funny. I hope to get to the others someday and I hope Suzann is doing all right. She was always fun to talk to.

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Mike Rouse (Email) - As news editor for the Carolinas in the 1960s I sent a newsman to do a story on how the unincorporated community of Whynot got its name. Guess how. A bunch of fellows were sitting around suggesting names and ... well, you can probably picture the rest.

I wish someone would do a similar story from Intercourse, Pa.

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Marc Wilson (Email) - I stopped in Peculiar, Mo., for gas, and asked the clerk if there was an Oddfellows Lodge. She didn't smile.

Connecting mailbox

Sponsor Dorothy on her walk to aid the poor

Dorothy Abernathy ([Email](#)) - During the year since I retired, I've volunteered for several groups, including the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which helps the poor. The society is new in Richmond, which makes the work particularly challenging. A lot of Richmonders have never heard of the society.

Still - friends near and far (including some readers of Connecting) helped us raise nearly \$80,000 in the past 15 months. These donations enabled us to help about 200 families. We've seen people who have lost their jobs or have been unable to work because of injury or illness. We've helped single mothers without child support who are trying to survive on little more than minimum wage. Our volunteers have helped families avoid homelessness or stay warm in the winter.

I've signed up to walk in our annual Friends of the Poor Walk, which raised about \$12,000 last year and was one of our biggest fundraisers. The walk is Oct. 6. Would you sponsor me for this year's walk? You can sponsor me at this link: <https://bit.ly/2BmsZdx> Donations are tax deductible.

To put a face on our work, we received a call a few weeks ago from a couple with six children. The mother works part time. The father, who worked full time, was seriously injured when he fell at work from a height of 14 feet. He is now disabled. He also suffers from mental illness unrelated to the accident. His worker's comp is ending. He expects to get a financial settlement, but he doesn't know when that will happen. He's working to get on Social Security disability, but that usually takes a year or more. The mother expects to start working full time at the end of the month. In the meantime, they've gotten behind on their bills. At the time they contacted us, they were waiting for the sheriff's office to put an eviction notice on their door. Family members, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and other groups worked together to keep this family in its home.

Thanks in advance to those of you who will support this effort and who have supported us in the past. I have been amazed to learn how much need there is -- even here in the suburbs. The county social services department does what it can, but it can't turn on a dime for people who need help quickly. Private groups like the Society of St. Vincent de Paul help fill that vacuum.

A group of French college students created the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 1833 to help the poor in the slums of Paris. Today the society serves the poor in 132 counties and has nearly a million members.

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Photos from election days past

Harry Cabluck ([Email](#)) - Is it possible that Cliff Schiappa's stunning photo (in Tuesday's Connecting) might have the funky dateline of, "Joshua Tree National Park;" if only contiguous to a Post Office with the same name?

Election Day often began for photostaffers with an early illustration for PM's members. As soon as polls opened... time to make a quick photo and race it to the network.



First photo showing five voters lined up, was shot on the way to work in Dallas.



Second photo, shot a few years earlier, shows voter and ballot boxes with dateline of Liberty, Ohio.

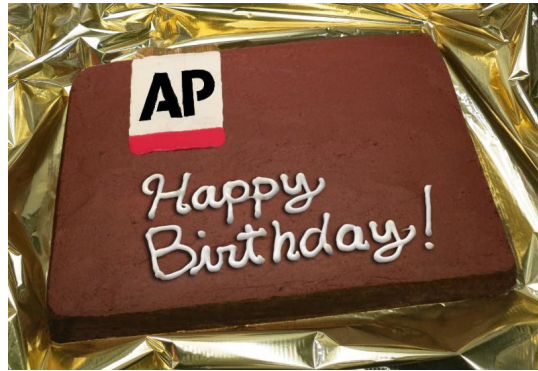
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Connecting sky shot - Long Beach Island



Brian Horton ([Email](#)) - Yesterday it was sunny and bright but we had just a few minutes of a misty light rain that passed through. Just enough to make this huge rainbow over the ocean waters just off Long Beach Island on the New Jersey coast.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Cindy Saul - cindysaul@gmail.com

Stories of interest

The New York Times Joins Effort to Combat Trump's Anti-Press Rhetoric (New York Times)



Newspapers from New York to North Dakota have agreed to publish editorials on Thursday in response to the president's anti-press rhetoric. Credit: Evan Vucci/Associated Press

By Jaclyn Peiser

The call to arms came in the form of a memo.

Marjorie Pritchard, the deputy managing editor of The Boston Globe, reached out to editorial boards at other newspapers last week.

"We propose to publish an editorial on August 16 on the dangers of the administration's assault on the press and ask others to commit to publishing their own editorials on the same date," the memo said.

As of Tuesday, more than 200 newspapers, including The New York Times, had signed on.

The Globe's effort to rally editorial writers across the country came in reaction to the president's stepped-up attacks on the media.

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

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Why Billionaire Craig Of Craigslist Is Giving Millions To Journalism And Education (Forbes)

By Angel Au-Yeung

At 65 years old, Craig Newmark-the founder of online classifieds behemoth Craigslist-frequently reflects on his life. "Everything now seems very surreal," he says, wearing his signature black beret on a foggy morning in San Francisco's Cole Valley neighborhood. "I didn't think I would start a very successful company. It has worked out much better than I thought, and now I can put my money where my mouth is."

By that, he means philanthropy. In the last few years, Newmark has ramped up his gift-giving through his Craig Newmark Philanthropies, having donated over \$40 million to journalism initiatives since 2015. He also contributed \$50 million to his private foundation in 2016. So far the foundation has been giving to causes that support military families, voter registration and women in technology. His newest gift, announced Monday morning, is a \$1 million grant for public school teachers in STEM education via DonorsChoose.org. Teachers at schools in which more than half of the students are from low-income households can apply to get funding for science and math classroom projects with Newmark's grant.

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

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Q&A: Steven Thrasher on what queer experience adds to any newsroom (CJR)

By **PETE VERNON**

WHO GETS TO TELL OUR STORIES? Why should newsroom managers care about diversity? Should objectivity be the journalist's goal? With these questions swirling around the journalism field, Northwestern announced this week a new endowed professorship that will focus on social justice in reporting, with a specific emphasis on LGBTQ issues. Steven Thrasher, a contributor to BuzzFeed News and The Guardian who is also a doctoral candidate in American studies at NYU, will be the inaugural holder of the Daniel H. Renberg Chair at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications.

Thrasher, who was named Journalist of the Year in 2012 by the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, will be teaching at Medill after defending his thesis in spring 2019. He spoke with CJR about his own career as a queer journalist of color, the value of diversity in reporting, and the lessons he hopes to impart on students at Northwestern. The following conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

Today in History - August 15, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 15, the 227th day of 2018. There are 138 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 15, 1945, in a pre-recorded radio address, Japan's Emperor Hirohito announced that his country had accepted terms of surrender for ending World War II.

On this date:

In 1483, the Sistine Chapel was consecrated by Pope Sixtus IV.

In 1812, the Battle of Fort Dearborn took place as Potawatomi warriors attacked a U.S. military garrison of about 100 people. (Most of the garrison was killed, while those who remained were taken prisoner.)

In 1914, the Panama Canal officially opened as the SS Ancon crossed the just-completed waterway between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

In 1935, humorist Will Rogers and aviator Wiley Post were killed when their airplane crashed near Point Barrow in the Alaska Territory.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces landed in southern France in Operation Dragoon.

In 1947, India became independent after some 200 years of British rule.

In 1961, as workers began constructing a Berlin Wall made of concrete, East German soldier Conrad Schumann leapt to freedom over a tangle of barbed wire in a scene captured in a famous photograph.

In 1965, the Beatles played to a crowd of more than 55,000 at New York's Shea Stadium.

In 1969, the Woodstock Music and Art Fair opened in upstate New York.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon announced a 90-day freeze on wages, prices and rents.

In 1974, a gunman attempted to shoot South Korean President Park Chung-hee during a speech; although Park was unhurt, his wife, Yuk Young-soo, was struck and killed, along with a teenage girl. (The gunman was later executed.)

In 1989, F.W. de Klerk was sworn in as acting president of South Africa, one day after P.W. Botha resigned as the result of a power struggle within the National Party.

Ten years ago: Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili grudgingly signed a U.S.-backed truce with Russia, even as he denounced the Russians as invading barbarians and accused the West of all but encouraging them to overrun his country. Michael Phelps won his sixth gold medal with his sixth world record, in the 200-meter individual medley at the Summer Olympics. American Nastia Liukin won the gold in women's individual all-around gymnastics; friend and teammate Shawn Johnson was second. Record producer Jerry Wexler, who coined the term "rhythm and blues," died in Sarasota, Fla. at age 91.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama scrapped plans for joint military exercises with Egypt, where spiraling violence in and around Cairo were claiming hundreds of lives. A powerful car bomb ripped through a crowded southern Beirut stronghold of Hezbollah, killing at least 27 people.

One year ago: President Donald Trump, who'd faced harsh criticism for initially blaming the deadly weekend violence in Charlottesville, Virginia on "many sides," told reporters that there were "very fine people on both sides" of the confrontation and that groups protesting against the white supremacists were "also very violent." (In between those statements, at the urging of aides, Trump had offered a more direct condemnation of white supremacists.) An Army Black Hawk helicopter with five soldiers aboard crashed during offshore training in Hawaii; all five were declared dead after a lengthy search. Sen. Luther Strange and former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore advanced to a Republican primary runoff to fill the U.S. Senate seat previously held by Attorney General Jeff Sessions. (Moore won the September runoff, but was defeated in the December special election by Democrat Doug Jones.)

Today's Birthdays: Actress Abby Dalton is 86. Actress Lori Nelson is 85. Civil rights activist Vernon Jordan is 83. Actor Jim Dale is 83. Actress Pat Priest is 82. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer is 80. U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., is 80. Musician Pete York (Spencer Davis Group) is 76. Author-journalist Linda Ellerbee is 74. Songwriter Jimmy Webb is 72. Rock singer-musician Tom Johnston (The Doobie Brothers) is 70. Actress Phyllis Smith is 69. Britain's Princess Anne is 68. Actress Tess Harper is 68. Actor Larry Mathews is 63. Actor Zeljko Ivanek (ZEHL'-koh eh-VON'-ehk) is 61. Actor-comedian Rondell Sheridan is 60. Rock singer-musician Matt Johnson (The The) is 57. Movie director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (ihn-YAH'-ee-tu) is 55. Philanthropist Melinda Gates is 54. Country singer Angela Rae (Wild Horses) is 52. Actor Peter Hermann is 51. Actress Debra Messing is 50. Actor Anthony Anderson is 48. Actor Ben Affleck is 46. Singer Mikey Graham (Boyzone) is 46. Actress Natasha Henstridge is 44. Actress Nicole Paggi is 41. Christian rock musician Tim Foreman (Switchfoot) is 40. Actress Emily Kinney is 34. Figure skater Jennifer Kirk is 34. Latin pop singer Belinda (cq) is 29. Actress Courtney Hope is 29. Rock singer Joe Jonas (The Jonas Brothers) is 29. Actor-singer Carlos PenaVega is 29. Actress Jennifer Lawrence is 28. Rap DJ Smoove da General (Cali Swag District) is 28.

Thought for Today: "Forgiveness is the key to action and freedom." - Hannah Arendt, American author and philosopher (1906-1975).

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>

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