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## Connecting -- August 16, 2018

1 message

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# Connecting

August 16, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning!

Our Connecting colleague **Mike Feinsilber** writes occasionally for **Jack Limpert's** blog, [Writing and Editing](#), and when he was asked by Jack to write a posting that compares operations at AP and UPI, Mike obliged.

Mike is qualified to speak to working for both wire services - he spent his first 25 years with UPI and then switched over to AP where he worked for another 25 years. He notes in his story that after he made that move to AP, whenever one of his former UPI colleagues ran into him, she'd hiss: "Traitor!"

Mike joined UPI in 1956 in Pittsburgh and worked in its Columbus, Harrisburg, Newark, New York, Saigon and Washington bureaus. He left for AP in 1979 as a general assignment reporter in Washington, later was reporter at large and ACoB for news before retiring in 2001. He was hired part-time as writing coach and completely retired in 2011. He covered every political convention from 1968 to 2000.

We lead with his story in today's issue - and I invite your thoughts on what Mike wrote and on your own competitive experiences in the days when UPI was a strong, viable contender to the AP.

Today's issue also brings you a remembrance by **Jane See White**, once an AP national writer who later worked at the Arizona Daily Star and the University of Arizona, involving two figures who today loom large on the national stage.

And surprise, surprise, more stories of your favorite datelines - a topic that shows no signs of letting down.

Have a good day.

Paul

## Once there were two: The war of the wires



## By Mike Feinsilber (Email)

Back when most people got most of the day's news from newspapers-printed downtown, delivered to the front porch, smelling of ink, fresh as a daisy-most of the news the papers carried that didn't originate around town came with one of two sets of initials in parentheses: (UPI) or (AP).

Those were the wire services -United Press International and Associated Press-that delivered a ton of stories relentlessly on Teletype machines, spewing it out at 60 words a minute. They delivered the news from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, or Ho Ho Kus, New Jersey, from Wall Street or Hollywood, from the state capital or Washington, from the ballparks, from the weatherman or the Weathermen, from anyplace that produced news outside of the local papers' reach.

The newspapers had their own staffs, people who covered the schools, the police blotter, the parades, the zoning board deliberations, the locals who had died and the next week's school lunch menus. But few newspapers, with the exception of a few giants, had the staff, money, or inclination to cover the election of a pope or a revolution in Mali, the NFL or the AFL-CIO, or UFO sightings, or even the goings on in the state capital: the news.

So all the news in the hometown paper that originated beyond the paper's circulation area came from the wires, AP or UPI. Most newspapers took (paid for) either one or the other. Only the classy papers had the willingness and resources to subscribe to both services. So at those papers a guy on the desk could decide which wire service's account was best and publish that one.

To the reader, there wasn't a discernible difference between the news that came from the AP or the news from UPI. Both wires provided stories that were straightforward, objective, balanced, not fancily written, not too well backgrounded, sometimes a little dull.

No one paid any attention to those parentheses that followed the dateline. But to the people behind those parentheses-to the editors wearing green eyeshades and reporters wearing holes in their soles-to those people the differences between AP and UPI were enormous.

AP people believed that AP stories were invariably superior. They believed they were more thoroughly reported, more deeply backgrounded, more dependably accurate.

UPI people believed that their stories were invariably more compelling, more sharply and concisely written, more interesting. UPI's nickname for AP was "Grandma."

AP people believed UPI stories were jazzed up, exaggerated, clichéd, sometimes of borderline truthfulness.

UPI people believed AP stories were wrung out to make them starchy, languid, wearisome, you know: b-o-r-i-n-g.

Read more [here](#).

## A convention assignment involving a future NYT Washington bureau chief and a future president

**Jane See White** ([Email](#)) - I've just finished watching the excellent Showtime documentary "The Fourth Estate" about the New York Times' coverage of the first year of the Trump administration and it kicked off a couple of AP memories I thought I'd share. They're both from the Democratic National Convention in New York in 1980. I was then a national writer for the AP based in New York and was assigned to cover parties during the convention. I wasn't thrilled with the assignment, which I felt was a little sexist, like the AP's then-practice of sending us women national writers to cover fashion week (a topic about which I, at least, had no knowledge, none). On the other hand, I was thrilled to get any chance at all to be involved in the convention coverage, however marginally, since the convention itself was Washington's story and they were all over it.



So, memory one: CBS was not-so-gently ousting Walter Cronkite after the convention to give Dan Rather the anchor chair and had organized a big-deal final-farewell event for him one night at Tavern on the Green. It was invitation only and I didn't have one, but I went over there on the off chance that they weren't policing the doors very carefully. No such luck. It appeared to be hermetically sealed; only one entrance was in use and a uniformed guy at a podium there was checking off names from a guest list as people arrived. Still, I thought I'd give it a try, so I approached the podium and identified myself as Mrs. Keith Fuller. Most of you will remember that Keith Fuller was then the general manager of the AP. And wow: Uniformed guy checked his list, nodded and waved me in. Current ethics guidelines would bar a

reporter from falsely identifying herself, and that's what I taught my journalism students at the University of Arizona for nearly 20 years, but we were a little more relaxed about such things then. I mean, it was just a party, right? I was now the only reporter present at the event who was not on the CBS payroll. I didn't think Keith would be angry if he learned what I'd done (as far as I know he never did find out) and at the time my only worry was that the Fullers would arrive and have a problem getting in. I hung out near the entrance until the speeches started, just to make sure.

While I was lurking, I was approached by a young woman wearing a lovely linen dress that was in mild disarray - it was pretty wrinkled and there was mud along the hem. Her stockings were torn, too. For some reason she asked me if I was a reporter and (enough with the lying, I thought), I said, yeah, I was with the AP. She was Elisabeth Bumiller, then a Style section reporter for the Washington Post, assigned to cover parties as a beat. She ruined my exclusive, but I have to admire how she got in to the Cronkite event: She told me she'd crawled through the bushes. And now, of course, she's the Washington Bureau chief of the New York Times, and plays a prominent role in "The Fourth Estate."

Memory two: I ran all over town, checking in on just about every party I could get to, looking for decent copy, trying to file at least twice a day, for AMs and PMs, and more often if possible. I don't think I wrote a story about a breakfast event held one morning in a deli on the ground level of the CBS building at West 52nd Street and 6th Avenue. Those attending were mostly just milling about, but eventually I was approached by a mustachioed older man who asked if I was with the press. Yes, I said, I'm with the AP. Well, he said, taking me by the elbow and guiding me across the room, you must meet my son. I don't remember his exact words, but what he said was, You need to know my son because he is going to be huge someday soon. It was Fred Trump and the son, of course, was Donald, who at that point had done next to nothing and was pretty much an unknown, so I shook his hand and left it at that.

## Connecting mailbox

### *Reception planned following Richard Pyle ceremony at Arlington next Monday*

**Brenda Smiley**, wife of colleague Richard Pyle, advises that those attending Richard's entombment ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Monday, Aug. 20, are invited to a reception beginning about 3:30pm, or a bit later depending upon the length of the ceremony.

The reception will be held at Lebanese Taverna, [2001 International Drive #1402](#), MacLean, VA, 22102, located on the level of the Tyson Galleria, a huge shopping area next to the original Tyson's Corner. It is about a 20-minute drive from the cemetery. Phone is 703 847 5244.

Reminder: Those attending the ceremony will gather Monday at the Arlington Reception Center at 1pm. Ceremony will begin at 2:00pm at the Niche Wall. A digital sign at the cemetery entrance gate will provide directions to proper parking.

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## ***Kudos to Cliff Schiappa on park photo***

**Cecilia White** ([Email](#)) - Fantastic photo by Cliff Schiappa in Tuesday's "Connecting." Joshua Tree National Park never looked dreamier nor more beautiful. Bravo, Cliff! You certainly made the most of available light on that starry night.

## **More of your favorite datelines**

**Paul Albright** ([Email](#)) - How many of you have been to Hell and back? If not, you could wait until Hell freezes over.

(In this case, Michigan, but it also could be Hell in Norway and in the Grand Cayman Islands).



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**George Arfield** ([Email](#)) - Not far from Salzburg, Austria, near the German border, adventurous scribes can compose multiple features revolving around this village's name. According to those who keep track of trivia, it is the most-stolen sign on the Continent, providing some evidence of how widely English has become the lingua franca of today's world.

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**Bill Koll (Email)** - This one's probably on the edge, but there's actually a village in Austria called Fucking . (It's pronounced "fooking.") When I was Vienna bureau chief, we talked about doing some kind of story, but of course it was impossible. There's certainly some hilarity - tourists kept stealing the town's signs until the Fucking mayor had them all bolted into giant balls of reinforced concrete.



My runner-up, and I did write from this dateline:  
Rottenegg, Austria.

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**Jim Bagby (Email)** - Speaking of Peculiar, sports fans may recall that when he owned the Kansas City A's, colorful and unpredictable Charles O. Finley threatened to move his American League franchise to the Kansas City suburb. But my favorite Missouri dateline is a little farther southeast on state highway 7, complete with its own Bank of Tightwad.

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**Claude Erbsen (Email)** - Way back when the dinosaurs roamed the earth and I was Brazil COB, I went out to the back of the beyond in the state of Parana, to cover the inauguration of a huge hydroelectric complex which served as the backdrop for the then President, General Humberto Castelo Branco, to outline the government's long range energy policy. I datelined my story with the name of a tiny settlement nearby, Urubupunga. The cable desk asked if I would provide a translation of the Tupi-Guarany word, and I obliged: Where the buzzard defecates. Only I used a shorter word. The desk quickly responded with something along the lines of "Sticking with original."

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**Joe Galloway (Email)** - When two prominent families were united in matrimony in Beeville TX:

Ball-Pullin Ceremony Held

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**Larry Hamlin (Email)** - In Oklahoma: We have a town that's just "Okay" and one that's really "Slick". For the gender reveal crowd, we have "Pink" and "Blue". If you're so inclined, you can go to "Disney" but it's nowhere near "Orlando". Believe it or not, we have a "Ripley". We have a "Clearview", even in "Cloudy". You never want to get stuck in "Cement", but you'll probably leap at the chance to visit "Frogville". It's kinda fun to say, "Sallisaw" "Henryetta" "Wagoner" "Bowlegs"... And then, there's "Horntown"... no comment. I lied, it's not too far from "Fallis"...

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**Bill Kaczor (Email)** - One of my biggest regrets was failing to find a way to get a byline out of Two Egg, Florida, a tiny town in the Florida Panhandle, before I retired. So my hat goes off to Tallahassee Correspondent Brendan Farrington who accomplished that feat in 2016 by writing a feature on places with strange names, which he bylined from Two Egg. Other places cited in his story are Weed, California; Uncertain, Texas; Eek and Chicken, Alaska; Santa Claus, Indiana; Butts County, Georgia; Intercourse, Blue Ball and Virginville, Pennsylvania, and Moonshine and Cut Off, Louisiana.

[Click here](#) for a link to Brendan's story.

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**Brendan Riley (Email)** - I recall spotting Timbuctoo, Calif., on a road map while looking for a route to a Yuba River swimming hole. Drove there one summer weekend to check it out (and swim) and ended up with a good feature story.

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**Estes Thompson (Email)** - Tick Bite and Millennium, NC

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**Jeffrey Ulbrich (Email)** - Two datelines I used while covering Canada remain my favorites: Witless Bay, Newfoundland and Head-Smashed-in-Buffalo-Jump, Alberta.

# America, help! The freedom of the nation depends on you, hundreds of news outlets write

By DAVID BEARD

Poynter.org

Here are excerpts from a nationwide drive of newspaper editorials to promote a free press and reject President Donald Trump's drive to scapegoat journalists as "enemies of the people." (Thanks to the many editors who e-mailed their editorials our way).

The Boston Globe: "Replacing a free media with a state-run media has always been a first order of business for any corrupt regime taking over a country."

Greensboro (North Carolina) News & Record: President Trump "believes there should be restrictions on how your government and elected officials should be covered, that there should be prohibitions on that flow of information. This in direct contradiction to the principle that the framers of our Constitution gave first priority ...

"That's the irrefutable reason that the authors of the Constitution specified a free press in its very first amendment. They were thinking about you."

Read more [here](#).

## Welcome to Connecting



Bill Brown - [bill@williamblakebrown.com](mailto:bill@williamblakebrown.com)

## Stories of interest

### ***Chicago Tribune columnist's dog 'writes' op-ed slamming Trump: 'You are not being a good boy'*** (The Hill)

BY AVERY ANAPOL

The Chicago Tribune on Wednesday ran an op-ed "written" by humor columnist Rex Huppke's pet dog, Zoe, tearing into President Trump for using "dog" as an insult.

The op-ed, addressed to "Large Human President," criticizes Trump for calling ex-White House aide Omarosa Manigault Newman

"I do not usually pay attention to human politics," Zoe wrote by "dictating" to Huppke. "I prefer more pleasant things like sniffing my friends' butts or rolling on a dead bird in the backyard or eating things that will make me throw up."

Zoe adds that Trump is "not being a good boy" by using "dog" to attack political opponents, and that it makes her "want to growl" at him.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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## ***Judge blasts Sun Sentinel for publishing confidential information in Parkland school shooting case***

**By Rafael Olmeda**

A furious judge scolded the South Florida Sun Sentinel on Wednesday for publishing confidential but legally obtained information about Parkland school shooter Nikolas Cruz.

Broward Circuit Judge Elizabeth Scherer said the newspaper flouted her order that portions of a school district report about Cruz should remain shielded from the public. In the future, she declared, she will consider listing exactly what the newspaper can and cannot print.

Scherer did not rule on a school district request that the newspaper and two reporters be held in contempt for publishing the information.

At issue is a report released Aug. 3 based on Cruz's educational record, revealing what officials knew about him in the years leading up to his Feb. 14 attack on Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, where he killed 17 people and wounded 17 more.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac, Mark Mittelstadt.

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## ***A Canadian journalist was physically attacked for doing his job. That should be huge news:***

## ***Robyn Urback*** (CBC)

**By Robyn Urback**

A member of the news media was assaulted by a protester in Toronto this past weekend.

The altercation happened on camera, in front of police, with dozens of people standing by. The incident in which a journalist was struck by an activist - ironically, at an anti-hate rally - seemed entirely unprovoked: a pathetic attack on someone who was just there to do his job.

Every Canadian who respects the role of the news media (and knows that grown-ups aren't supposed to hit each other) ought to be outraged. Though, at a guess, at least a few readers are only learning about this incident now.

The encounter happened Saturday, when a number of anti-fascism groups assembled to counter a planned protest by the Calgary-based Worldwide Coalition Against Islam (WCAI) organization at Nathan Phillips Square, outside Toronto City Hall. The WCAI protest was actually cancelled ahead of time, but the counter-protest was held anyway, and it was there that a Toronto Sun photographer was attacked by a still-unidentified protester.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Softening online scourge of long-past indiscretions*** (Southeast Missourian)

**By JON RUST**

Last week the Southeast Missourian implemented a new policy to govern how crime reports are made available to search engines. As I wrote when announcing a draft of the change, "The new policy seeks to strike a balance between the Southeast Missourian keeping the public informed and recognizing, sympathetically, that in

today's world of instant digital search, long-past minor indiscretions can play a disproportionate role in a person's online identity."

For more information about the policy itself -- and how it specifically works-- please see my past columns or visit [www.semissourian.com/help/delisting](http://www.semissourian.com/help/delisting).

Today, I want to share with you excerpts from some of the feedback received after the draft policy was shared.

\* Upon seeing the policy draft article, I feel a lot of things all at once. Pride, relief and hope, among other things, but these three really stand out. I love everything about the idea behind delisting prior misdemeanor rulings and reportings. The sense of pride I feel from seeing this in my long-time local newspaper before any other source is unbelievable. The very idea of these things no longer haunting people we all know in our personal lives is astounding. I really hope this comes to pass because second chances are what being human is essentially about. Thank you, Colby

\* Thank you so much for considering this compassionate new approach.

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

## Today in History - August 16, 2018



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Thursday, Aug. 16, the 228th day of 2018. There are 137 days left in the year.

### **Today's Highlight in History:**

On August 16, 1987, 156 people were killed when Northwest Airlines Flight 255 crashed while trying to take off from Detroit; the sole survivor was 4-year-old Cecelia Cichan (SHEE'-an).

### **On this date:**

In 1812, Detroit fell to British and Indian forces in the War of 1812.

In 1858, a telegraphed message from Britain's Queen Victoria to President James Buchanan was transmitted over the recently laid trans-Atlantic cable.

In 1861, President Abraham Lincoln issued Proclamation 86, which prohibited the states of the Union from engaging in commercial trade with states that were in rebellion - i.e., the Confederacy.

In 1920, Ray Chapman of the Cleveland Indians was struck in the head by a pitch thrown by Carl Mays of the New York Yankees; Chapman died the following morning.

In 1948, baseball legend Babe Ruth died in New York at age 53.

In 1954, Sports Illustrated was first published by Time Inc.

In 1956, Adlai E. Stevenson was nominated for president at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

In 1962, The Beatles fired their original drummer, Pete Best, replacing him with Ringo Starr.

In 1977, Elvis Presley died at his Graceland estate in Memphis, Tennessee, at age 42.

In 1987, people worldwide began a two-day celebration of the "harmonic convergence," which heralded what believers called the start of a new, purer age of humankind.

In 1991, Pope John Paul II began the first-ever papal visit to Hungary.

In 2003, Idi Amin, the former dictator of Uganda, died in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia; he was believed to have been about 80.

Ten years ago: At the Beijing Olympics, Michael Phelps touched the wall a hundredth of a second ahead of Serbia's Milorad Cavic (MEE'-loh-rahd KAH'-vihch) to win the 100-meter butterfly, giving Phelps his seventh gold medal of the Games, tying Mark Spitz's performance in the 1972 Munich Games. Usain (yoo-SAYN') Bolt of Jamaica ran the 100-meter dash in a stunning world-record time of 9.69 seconds. Talk show host Ellen DeGeneres and actress Portia de Rossi were married at their Beverly Hills home.

Five years ago: In a spacewalk lasting seven hours and 29 minutes, Russian cosmonauts rigged cable outside the International Space Station for a new lab that was due to arrive in a few months.

One year ago: The University of Florida denied a request by white supremacist Richard Spencer to rent space on the campus for a September event. (The university later allowed Spencer to appear in October, saying it was legally obligated to allow the expression of many viewpoints.) President Donald Trump disbanded two White House business councils, amid criticism from CEOs for his remarks on the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Ann Blyth is 90. Actor Gary Clarke is 85. Actress Julie Newmar is 85. Actress-singer Ketty Lester is 84. Actor John Standing is 84. College Football Hall of Famer and NFL player Bill Glass is 83. Actress Anita Gillette is 82. Actress Carole Shelley is 79. Country singer Billy Joe Shaver is 79. Movie director Bruce Beresford is 78. Actor Bob Balaban is 73. Ballerina Suzanne Farrell is 73. Actress Lesley Ann Warren is 72. Rock singer-musician Joey Spampinato is 70. Actor Marshall Manesh is 68. Actor Reginald VelJohnson is 66. TV personality Kathie Lee Gifford is 65. Rhythm-and-blues singer J.T. Taylor is 65. Movie director James Cameron is 64. Actor Jeff Perry is 63. Rock musician Tim Farriss (INXS) is 61. Actress Laura Innes is 61. Singer Madonna is 60. Actress Angela Bassett is 60. Actor Timothy Hutton is 58. Actor Steve Carell (kuh-REHL') is 56. Former tennis player Jimmy Arias is 54. Actor-singer Donovan Leitch is 51. Actor Andy Milder is 50. Actor Seth Peterson is 48. Country singer Emily Robison (The Dixie Chicks) is 46. Actor George Stults is 43. Singer Vanessa Carlton is 38. Actor Cam Gigandet is 36. Actress Agnes Bruckner is 33. Singer-musician Taylor Goldsmith (Dawes) is 33.

Actress Cristin Milioti is 33. Actor Shawn Pyfrom is 32. Country singer Ashton Shepherd is 32. Actor Okieriete Onaodowan is 31. Country singer Dan Smyers (Dan & Shay) is 31. Actor Kevin G. Schmidt is 30. Actress Rumer Willis is 30. Actor Parker Young is 30. Rapper Young Thug is 27. Actor Cameron Monaghan is 25. Singer-pianist Greyson Chance is 21.

**Thought for Today: "The most persistent threat to freedom, to the rights of Americans, is fear." - George Meany (born this date in 1894, died in 1980).**

## 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.

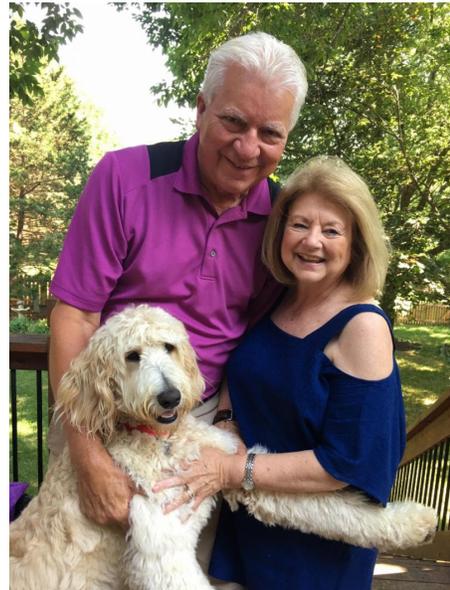
- **"A silly mistake that you make"** - a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.

- **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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