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Connecting -- August 20, 2018

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# Connecting

August 20, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning!

Today's Connecting Q-and-A takes you to Africa where our colleague **Victoria Graham** works as training editor for The Star, a newspaper that is part of the Radio Africa Group and is based in Nairobi, Kenya.



It has been 24 years since she left The Associated Press after a fine 22-year career in domestic and international bureaus. That career started in Indianapolis where she was hired by Chief of Bureau **Joe McGowan**, who today is also a Connecting colleague, and continued in San Francisco where she worked with then news editor **Marty Thompson** and newswoman **Edie Lederer** (today, both Connecting colleagues).

She has been with the Star since 2014 and notes in her profile:

"I'm sure I got the job because of my AP background. I never appreciated it more than I do now...I work with some very smart people, excellent editors, but most writers couldn't survive at a news agency, in terms of solid journalism and speed - despite all this talk of 'digital first'..."

[Click here](#) for a link to The Star web site.

An AP journalist who once worked with Vicki is being honored today and I know some of you are attending.

A military ceremony for **Richard Pyle** will be held at Arlington National Cemetery - a final tribute to the legendary Associated Press newsman and bureau chief who died in 2017. The entombment of his ashes will take place at 2 p.m. at the Niche Wall. Attendees will gather at 1 p.m. at the cemetery's Administration Building, just off Memorial Avenue as one enters the cemetery. A reception will be held about 3:30 p.m. at Lebanese Taverna, [2001 International Drive #1402](#), MacLean, VA, 22102, located on the level of the Tyson Galleria.



**Niche Wall at Arlington**

(NOTE: there will be no direct Metro Service from Arlington Cemetery to Metro Center. Therefore, best way to reach Arlington and then return to DC would be via Uber or taxi. The alternative on the Metro would involve changing trains via a circuitous route. Hence, arriving and leaving Arlington should be via taxi or Uber or car (as there is pay-for-parking at the cemetery).

Have a great week!

Paul

## Connecting Q-and-A

# Victoria Graham



**Vicki Graham (center) in The Star office with John Muchangi, science writer, and Grace Kerongo, society editor. looking at a story.**

### **Where am I now?**

Training Editor, the Star, newspaper and website, Radio Africa Group, since June 2014. I just signed another two-year contract and hope to stay here and work as long as I can. I love being in the news business again and I love Africa.

In 2003 I left the States for a job in Thailand (Asia Times Online) and I haven't returned or looked back. I don't have family, though I do have friends. I should return briefly to clear out a huge storage space in Upstate New York. But I don't miss living in the States, though it would be great to see the beautiful Hudson River in summer.

I grew up in the Bay Area, went to Stanford, worked in Winnemucca, Nevada (The Territorial Enterprise). Then, the Palo Alto Times. After 22 years with the AP, I worked briefly for UNICEF in Africa. I didn't love the UN system but I did love Africa.

Now I'm back.

I'm divorced, no relatives or children, so I'm free to do as I wish. That means working in and exploring Africa.

### **How did I get here?**

1972: Joined AP in Indianapolis, COB Joe McGowan. Hog markets, night radio, Indiana high school basketball, Indy 500. I worked long hours, did as much enterprise as possible, hoping to write my way to another posting.

1972-73: Moved to San Francisco. Jim Lagier CoB, Marty Thompson news editor. Both were great. Lagier always said, "Accept every assignment with enthusiasm," He said the best writers (can) make the best editors (I don't think that's always so true). Anyhow, he put me on the desk as day editor. I protested (he always listened) but I bought a new dress and was in at 6am or so - only to find that Patty Hearst had been kidnapped. We were holding the story at the request of police. That was my first day. Exhausting, exhilarating. It never let up. Baptism by fire. I loved it. I remember sitting next to Edie Lederer, one of us doing AMs, one PMs. Marty Thompson hovering and helping us make it better.

1975 or so: Moved to NY, Mod Squad with Jurate Kazikas, Dolores Barclay... who else? Peter Arnett was around. Moved to Sunday Features, which I had wanted. However, I was the first to turn on the lights in the morning. I missed the adrenaline and deadline pressure.

One day, out of the blue, Keith Fuller asked me if I wanted to go to China. We had no one in the pipeline. There were people with more news experience and Chinese language skills. There was understandable resentment. But they wanted a girl feature writer. That was me. I immediately said, "Yes, I'd love to go." No hesitation.

John Barbour said it must be a difficult decision for me since I was a Writer, not just a reporter. But it was easy.

1979-84: China, rehabilitation of Deng Xioping, end of communes, Mao statues pulled down, the budding of private enterprise. Democracy Wall, opening to the West.

I was there with CoB John Roderick, the old China hand, and Liu Heung Shing, photojournalist (later won Pulitzer on behalf of AP in Moscow). Other news organisations had been there for years, but for us the "gee whiz" factor was important. I later became bureau chief. Roderick advised against it, saying, "Dear, don't try your hand at analysis."

1984-88: New Delhi, CoB Subcontinent (except Pakistan).

In my first year (last six months of '84) three of the world's top 10 stories broke: The siege of the Golden Temple, the assassination of Indira Gandhi/anti-Sikh riots, and Bhopal gas leak. Nate and everyone came to help. Terry Anderson, Bob Reid, Michael Goldsmith, Richard Pyle. The Indian government was furious at our reporting on the Golden Temple and Sikhs shot with their hands tied behind their back. Our reporter ended up in court, case eventually dropped. But it was stressful, to say the least.



**AP office motorcycle with sidecar. Photojournalist Liu Heung Shing and Richard Pyle.**

I never got to ride an elephant in Rajasthan or write enough about the 'real' India. It was always 'whither India?'

1988-89 Returned to NY, UN correspondent.

1994, quit AP, I was getting burned out. I joined UNICEF in Africa as "regional emergency information coordinator," trying to get foreign press interested in women and children in conflict. All the real journalists treated me like a flak.

I arrived, shortly after the Rwandan genocide. The AP won the Pulitzer that year, 1994, as I recall. I felt that I had crossed over the dark side, employment-wise, and I didn't enjoy it - I had thought it would be like being a foreign correspondent - action, adventure, good writing and good deeds. I didn't like the PR and the bureaucracy. I lived in Nairobi with a family that ran safaris. I visited Rwanda, Burundi, Goma, and briefly Angola and Somalia.

But Africa was great and I knew I would return. Eventually I did.

I didn't last long in UNICEF. I returned to New York, did some freelance work, became news editor of Women's Enews, a public policy website.

2003: Thailand, Hua Hin, Asia Times Online, East Asia Editor.

2005: Moved to Shanghai, worked for Shanghai Daily as a 'foreign expert'- basically copy editor in features, opinion departments.

If there was anything I'd do over, it would be spending less time in China on my second tour. Journalistically stultifying. I subbed feature stories, opinion pages and some news. I did learn a lot about the system. The glittering Shanghai veneer should never deceive you about the authoritarian nature of the system. The other day, I read that Disney's Winnie the Pooh was considered subversive, and was banned. However, I met some excellent people.

When the Chinese (becoming increasingly anti-foreign) didn't renew my work permit, I looked for work in Cambodia, Cairo and Istanbul. Then I remembered Nairobi and sent an email to the Star Editor in Chief William Pike (former editor of New Vision in Uganda, until Museveni decided the coverage wasn't positive enough). wasn't). He responded quickly, said they were looking for a training editor. It all fell into place. I also wrote to the Standard and the Nation, never heard back.



**At the Great Wall**

Now I do everything: training/coaching, subbing stories, revising pages, brainstorming, putting out the paper, checking P1 for problems and typos. I feel valued. It's very hands on. I love it and plan to stay. I work very long hours, sometimes 9-8 or 9, or later.

This is my fifth year as training editor; I just signed up for another two years.

After China, it's great to be in Africa, working for a real newspaper. All those years and I hadn't worked on a newspaper. And I can breathe again. People don't have to lower their voices when they talk about politics.

I'm sure I got the job because of my AP background. I never appreciated it more than I do now. I work with some very smart people, excellent editors, but most writers couldn't survive at a news agency, in terms of solid journalism and speed - despite all this talk of "digital first". Sometimes, as training editor, I feel as though I'm hitting my head against a wall. But there are rewards. Most "journalists" everywhere think of journalism as a job, not a calling. The same is true here; fortunately, there are exceptions. Many subeditors here have no news experience, which is scary - it always shows.



**At home with friend Mary Vetello**

And we have a new editor with great energy and ideas. He used to be editor of the Sunday Standard. I soldier on and hope for the best.

The Star (part of the Radio Africa Group) used to be a scrappy little newspaper, the third in the market after the Nation and Standard. Often in the doghouse with State House. But it has declined and we're trying to revive it - without spending much money and hiring new people.

There are great stories. Politics is a circus, a swamp. The elite "eat" (meaning steal, grab money) like famished hyenas.



Star editorial cartoon by Victor Ndula

Politicians are blatantly unprincipled, which is not so strange but their brazenness is breathtaking. Recently MPs (also known as MPigs) were accused of dishing out trifling Sh10,000 (US1,000) bribes - in the corridors and a toilet at Parliament buildings - to shoot down a report indicting Cabinet Secretaries over import of contraband and poisonous sugar. But they said they were just taking up collections for a friend's wedding.

Sleaze is everywhere. "Rot" is a common word in headlines. Writers love to "lift the lid" on some horror or underhand dealings. Everyone is plotting something; at first I thought that word was excessive. Now I know it's true.

The presidential election was nullified by the courageous Supreme Court and enraged President Uhuru Kenyatta who called judges 'wakora' (crooks) and pledged to 'revisit' handling of the election. His victory in an uncontested rerun was affirmed.

There are stories of witchcraft (and politicians seeking out witchdoctors during elections), curses, cattle rustling, poaching, hippos killing tourists and farmers. Night runners strip naked and run in the night, accompanied by their familiar, maybe a snake or a hyena. Witchcraft is against the law.

Many people still vote based on tribe, not issues. Girls still suffer female genital mutilation. Al Shabaab terrorists makes forays from Somalia. They also have been hiding for three years in a forest and the army can't get rid of them.



The Kenya Wildlife Service "translocated" 12 rhinos and 11 died. The governor of Nairobi city-county used to be covered in bling, and once was said to be a former drug dealer, which he denies.

And, of course, there's the increasing Chinese presence. Since they don't concern themselves with local problems of corruption, I'm sure that vast amounts have changed hands in the building of the standard gauge railway.

We're in the middle of a sweeping, anti-corruption campaign, complete with life-style audits, high-profile arrests. But no one believes it will amount to much.

In Nairobi Susan Linnee was the first to welcome me, my first friend. She included me in many a lovely dinner and introduced me to her friends and colleagues. She was going to come back and stay with me again. She left me her hand-painted dishes from Portugal, other kitchen things and a gorgeous orange-red woolen Moroccan blanket. I miss her.



**Vicki with Sudan, last surviving last male northern white rhino at Ol Pejeta. 2017. He made the news when he died in March 2018. He was captured in Sudan, spent most of his life in a Czech zoo, then returned to Africa.**

When I catch my breath, I go on safaris. Masai Mara, Samburu, Laikipia conservancy, and elsewhere.

I love the animals and never get tired of the adventure. It's still a thrill to see elephants, lions, leopards, cheetahs. There's so much to explore. Other countries I

haven't seen.

I collect marvelous African masks and art. I'm learning Swahili, which is really quite simple and filled with wonderful onomatopoeic words, but my memory isn't what it used to be. I could probably survive in it, however.

I'd do it all over again.

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## When Ms. Franklin calls: AP reporter reflects on Queen of Soul



This 2011 file photo shows Aretha Franklin in Auburn Hills, Mich. On Thursday, Aug. 16, 2018, Franklin died from pancreatic cancer at her home in Detroit. She was 76. (AP Photo/Paul Sancya.)

By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY

NEW YORK (AP) - When I got the chance to interview Aretha Franklin for the first time in 2001, I was already a bundle of nerves: Even though it was just over the phone, I'd be talking to THE Queen of Soul! You could get no closer to rock 'n' roll royalty than the Queen herself.

So my trepidation was magnified when a colleague told me not to expect much: Franklin was famously guarded and known for giving short, to-the-point answers and little in the way of introspection.

Sure enough, when we spoke on the topic at hand - a VH1 Divas concert honoring her music - Franklin didn't offer much at first. But then, I remembered that she was a huge "The Young and the Restless" fan, and in particular, of Victor Newman, as was I. So we chatted about that. And before long, she opened up a bit more, and while I didn't get any big scoops that day, I got a bit of her flair, her personality and her regalness - when I asked her if she thought she was the ultimate diva, she retorted, "What do YOU think?"



**Nekesa Mumbi Moody**

Over the years, we'd have many more conversations. Sometimes, I'd get a note from her publicist, Gwendolyn Quinn, who'd let me know that Franklin would like to talk to me; she sometimes rang me on her own. She called me Ms. Moody, and I of course called her Ms. Franklin (though sometimes, just "Aretha" would pop out, revealing my lack of home training).

In some ways, our conversations weren't particularly deep: She didn't expound on the kind of life experiences that allowed her to convey emotion on a track like no other; we didn't delve into the magic behind classics like "Ain't No Way" or "(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman."

We spoke when she was working on new music, or about an upcoming performance (like when she sang for the Pope in 2015) or even her fitness plan and weight loss. And her love of tennis (she was a frequent attendee at the U.S. Open).

But at times, our talks were revealing. In one 2007 interview, she vented her frustration that while she was among the greatest stars that popular music had ever produced, that never transferred to the big screen, despite small roles in movies like "The Blues Brothers." She blamed it on racism.

Read more [here](#).

# For whom the bell tolls

**Gene Herrick** ([Email](#)) - Life is a paradox, and mine certainly is.

Returning home from colon cancer surgery is a blessing I wondered if I would experience. At the tender ripe age of 92 each moment of life becomes a blessing.

To me, hospitals are like a mother-in-law - they are uncomfortable and dubious, but necessary when needed. For the seven days of internment, I was treated well, disturbed almost hourly with physical testing, and the denial of the privilege of seeing my doctor, "Jack Daniels." The hospital staff was generally comforting, but the visit at 3 a.m. by a cardiac physician, who not-to-gently reminded me of some heart fibrillation could give me a stroke, and probably death. How's that for a sleeping pill? Following surgery, my doctor told me that he took out one-third of my malignant colon, and that I am now cancer free!

The clue to an experience like this is to keep the faith, roll with the punches, and keep a sense of humor. I asked every female nurse and aide to marry me, but thankfully, they all refused. Kitty, love of my life, just smiled.

Before surgery I asked the doctor to also perform an optirectomy. He wondered what that was. I explained that is was cutting the never between my eyes and my rectum, so that I wouldn't have that crappy outlook on life. I also asked him to not remove my uterus.

Ernest Hemingway was a pretty fair writer, and his words say what I want to say, but in a much more beautiful way.

"Dying was nothing and he had no picture of it nor fear of it in his mind. But living was a field of grain blowing in the wind on the side of a hill. Living was a hawk in the sky. Living was an earthen jar of water in the dust of the threshing with the grain flailed out and the chaff blowing. Living was a horse between your legs and a carbine under one leg and a hill and a valley and a stream with trees along it and the far side of the valley and the hills beyond." - **Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls**

Yes, I have a plethora of thoughts and feelings today. As an old-timer, who has had a life of thrills, adventure, love, fear, and life-threatening experiences, my future is one of hope. I do not fear death, but if I had a choice, I wouldn't mind sticking around for a while. I still have a lot to learn, people to see, and places to go.

"How little we know of what there is to know. I wish that I were going to live a long time instead of going to die today because I have learned much about life in these four days; more, I think than in all other time. I'd like to be an old man to really know. I wonder if you keep on learning or if there is only a certain amount each man can understand. I thought I knew so many things that I know nothing of. I wish there was more time." **Ernest Hemingway, For Whom The Bell Tolls**

"At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them." (LUKE 4, NIV)

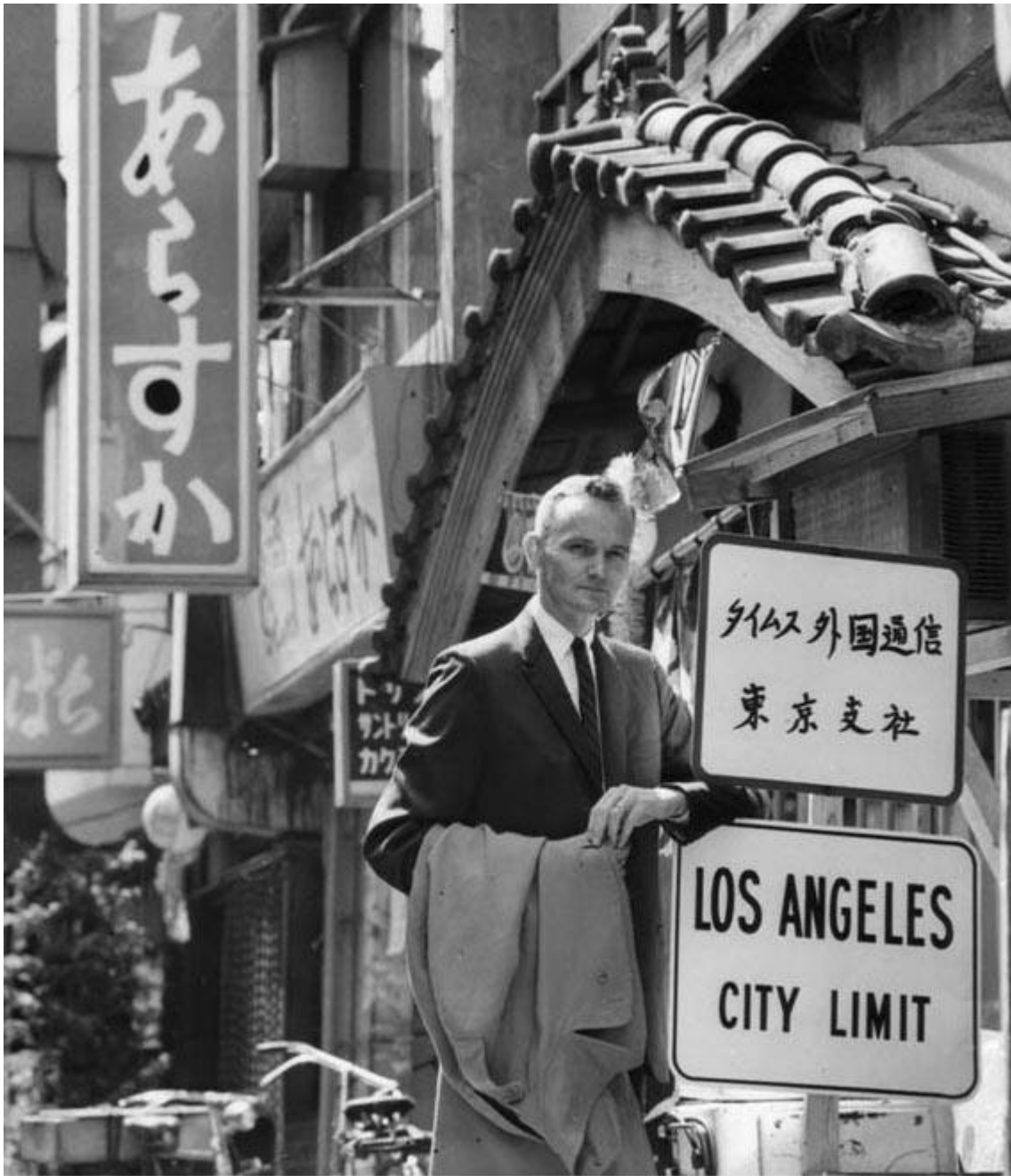
I am not fearful of death, but I am certainly curious about the decision and outcome. I have never been there, but sometimes close. Please, my friends, these are my thoughts at this crossroads of my life. I have had a rewarding life, especially those 28 years with The Associated Press, and the wonderful people with whom I worked around the world. I have been humbled by the response I have received from AP people, most of whom I had never met. What a team! I also had an interesting life working in the field of Developmental Disabilities, and the people with intellectual problems.

In his 1968 book, Strength to Love, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., says, "The ultimate measure of a man [or woman] is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

I pray that my life on earth has not been wasted. God bless.

## **Connecting mailbox**

### ***A reminder of milestone in my own life***



*Blake's father Ted Sell, publicizing the opening of the Tokyo bureau for the Los Angeles Times in 1962.*

**Blake Sell (Email)** - In 1989, over 29 years ago, my father died and I created a calendar reminder for today's date, August 17, 2018. Today isn't the anniversary of his death, the reminder is a milestone in my own life.

I created the reminder the day he died to reflect one day far into the future of my own life, and to try to know how he might have felt about his own life, and his own age, that last morning of his last day. Today is that day.

On the day my father died, 10,697 days ago, he was 22,146 days old. Today I am 22,146 days old as well, the exact same age in days. Every day forward from today I am older than my father ever was, experiencing life at an age my father was never was able to live.

So today is a day of reflection for me, of looking back and of looking forward, thinking about choices made and to make, of thinking about age, age in days, age in emotions, age in maturity, age in outlook and of age remaining.

At my father's funeral 29 years ago, I remember the speakers sharing the theme of how it was a pity my father died so young. His friends and work colleagues one after the other took my hand and told me it was such a shame he had died so young. I was only 11,449 days old, 31, on the day he died. My father seemed old to me.

He seemed old to me when he came out to watch me play little league when I was nine, and he seemed old to me as I watched him withering over the final nine months of his life, his strength and presence declining from the self-inflicted wounds of a lifetime of cigarette smoking.

My father had three adult children and had accomplished much in his professional life. In the same life span as my father, I've never had children, never experienced trying to raise a family or to provide for one. We led very different personal lives in our 22,146 days here.

Most striking in my reflection is how young I feel today, maybe because I took a different personal path and made different choices. I wish I could say I made better or sounder choices but I know that's not true.

Maybe he still felt young too when he woke up for the last time 22,146 days into his life. Maybe everybody feels young while the younger always see them as old.

Today I have lived the same number of days as my father. Tomorrow, I start to lead a life he was never able to experience and I want to live a life he would have enjoyed.

*(Connecting colleague Blake Sell posted this on Facebook on August 17, 2018.)*

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## ***A dateline from A SECURE UNDISCLOSED LOCATION***

**Sandy Johnson** ([Email](#)) - In the months after 9/11, the feds kept spiriting Vice President Dick Cheney to what it called secret undisclosed locations as a precaution for the continuity of government. Some of these locations were pretty well-known to the locals, who knew for decades of underground bunkers in their communities, most built in the Cold War era. We sent reporter Cal Woodward -- an enterprise reporter, not an investigative reporter -- to check out a tip. After Cal came back to write a colorful feature story, the phone rang with an angry press secretary Ari Fleischer accusing AP of putting national security and Cheney's life at risk. I sputtered, what are you talking about? He said the White House had been told an AP reporter was snooping around the grounds of a secret undisclosed location. I told him we had no intention of exposing any particular location but that surely he knew these sites were open secrets in those communities. And when a vice presidential helicopter squadron with armed guards swoops in, that's pretty much putting out a single that says "The VP is in." We argued a bit more, and I finally convinced him (I think) the story was harmless. The dateline when it published: A SECURE UNDISCLOSED LOCATION.

[Click here](#) for a link to the story.

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## ***A scene that silenced locker room writers***

**Paul Shane** ([Email](#)) - AP's Jack Hand and Vince Lombardi have been recently mentioned:

To no avail, writers had been begging Vince Lombardi for an interview in advance of the NFL Championship game against Dallas.

On a chilly Saturday, the day before the Ice Bowl, players and reporters, mostly reporters, crowded the GB dressing room. From the far end, the referees dressing room door opened and out walked nude, except waist towel, Vince Lombardi and like-dressed Jack Hand. Both had towels over their shoulders.

As they walked, Lombardi said not a word, but raised his no-pictures hand. At the end of the dressing room, they entered the team's sauna.



The room was silent. The expressions on the writers' faces was priceless.

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## ***Assigned to cover double execution that never happened***

**Greg Nokes** ([Email](#)) - Bill Beecham's references to the Utah State Prison at Point of the Mountain reminds me of the time I almost covered a double execution at that prison.

I can't recall the specific year, although it would have been 1966 or so. But the names of those involved are etched in my mind to these 50-plus years later. The circumstances were these:

An adult inmate, Mack Merrill Rivenburg, and a teen-age inmate, Jesse Garcia, 18, were convicted of the grisly beheading of another inmate who had used Garcia as a sex slave. As I recall, Rivenburg wanted Garcia for himself. Garcia had been in the adult prison since age 15. I've forgotten what for.

Both Rivenburg and Garcia were sentenced to death by firing squad--condemned men were then given the choice of firing squad or hanging. They picked firing squad. After all the appeals were exhausted, I was assigned by CoB Bob Myers to cover the execution at Point of the Mountain, the prospect of which both repelled and intrigued me, and kept me awake at night. However, during the night before the execution (possibly it was two nights) and after the firing squad of six had been chosen, one of whom unknowingly would fire blanks to no one could be sure he had fired one of the fatal shots, Rivenburg was found dead in his cell. He had arranged to have a poison smuggled into his cell. He left a note saying that with his death, the state would never execute Garcia because of his age.

And, indeed, that was the outcome. Garcia was instead re-sentenced to life in prison. I was both disappointed and relieved that I wouldn't be covering an execution after all.

Many years later, I tried to find out what happened to Garcia. I had known a professor at the University of Utah, Dr. Paul Wyler, who was working with him, but he was no longer at the university and I couldn't locate him. Also, a less-than-helpful

PAO at Point of the Mountain said he couldn't find any information, other than Garcia was no longer listed as an inmate. I let the matter drop as I was on to other things. In my long career, I never covered an execution, thankfully so.

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## ***Paul Shane: one of unsung heroes who worked tirelessly behind the scenes***

**Mark Mittelstadt** ([Email](#)) - Was happy to read the Q-and-A with Paul Shane in last Monday's Connecting.

Paul was one of the unsung heroes who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to keep The Associated Press running and to make it better.

I got to know Paul after being named chief of bureau in Albuquerque in 1988. The appointment came with a Leading Edge desktop computer with yellow monochrome monitor, a printer, word processing and spreadsheet programs (WordPerfect, Lotus 123 anyone?) and a custom software interface to learn. I made many, many calls to Paul in New York for help.

Not long after that the Dallas hub, which included New Mexico, was selected to test new PCs someone in Communications had spotted at a trade show and decided to buy for all AP offices and bureaus. The Nokia computers were Finnish and came with their own version of a disk operating system, which varied from domestic MS-DOS. While the Editorial applications were handled by others, administrative functions rested with Paul. Many, many more and lengthy calls to New York trying to figure out and resolve bugs that were keeping the Nokias from running smoothly.

Moving to headquarters in 2000, I again had the good fortune of working with Paul on the Associated Press Managing Editors web site and other small computer matters. At his desk Paul had used duct tape to connect two tube computer monitors together for a dual monitor set-up, something still rare at that time. Multiple monitors eventually became something of a norm, with some editorial computers having as many as four.

Paul was a photographer, photo editor, darkroom supervisor and an MIS fixer. But he also was a teacher. The DOS and .html training I received from him over the phone and in person came in handy over the years and still does.

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## ***Carol Stark: Time for another fight; need you in my corner***

**Carol Stark** ([Email](#)) - I've always told people that I'm at my best when my back's against the wall.



Well, it seems that's where I find myself now. And the fists are coming up.

My cancer is back again. Since the first of May, we've been running tests, biopsies, discussing game plans, etc. But there is no easy fix nor magic pill, which is what I kept waiting for. Nope, we're going to do this the hard way.

Chemotherapy will begin on Tuesday at the University of Kansas Sarcoma Center. I will be getting a brand-new targeted therapy along with an old drug I took 13 years ago. My job now is to provide the fight. Let's just say I've had some practice.

Some of you may wonder why I always choose to make my illness so public. Believe me when I say I am not fishing for sympathy or homemade casseroles. I'm not trying to make you uncomfortable. It's just my way of being transparent with those who read The Joplin Globe. There's a bit of a change in the newsroom universe these days. So, if you have emailed or called me in the past six days and I didn't get back to you, understand that's not my normal style. And, in case you are wondering, I didn't have time to alert you that I switched out the daily "Wallace the Brave" strip, which many of you hated, with "Non Sequitur." (No, I can't get "Soup to Nutz" back because the cartoonist is no longer in syndication.)

Read more [here](#). Carol, a Connecting colleague, is editor of The Joplin (MO) Globe, a regional editor for CNHI and president of the Missouri Press Association.

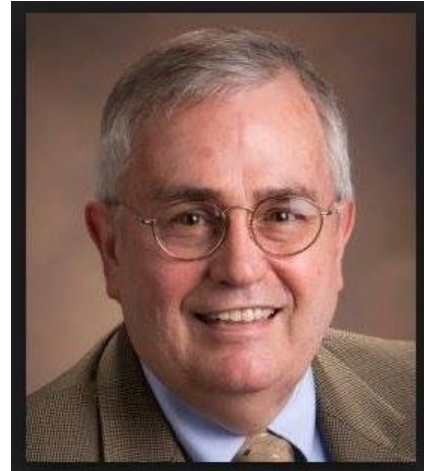
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## ***Al Cross has a new title - professor***

**Al Cross** ([Email](#)) began his 15th year as director of the University of Kentucky's Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues this month with a new title: professor.

Cross had been an associate professor with tenure in UK's School of Journalism and Media since 2011, but this summer he was promoted to full professor, the highest academic rank.

His appointment is in the Extension Title series, because most of his work is directed off campus. He is the only full professor in that title series outside the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. He works in the College of Communication and Information.



Cross is editor and publisher of The Rural Blog, a daily digest of events, trends, issues, ideas and journalism from and about rural America; Kentucky Health News, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky; and the Midway Messenger, a newspaper (mainly online, in print twice a year) that he and his community journalism students produce for Midway, Ky., between Lexington and Frankfort.



## **Reporters overcome fears to expose faith crackdown in China**



**A painting of the Last Supper is seen next to posters quoting China's constitution on religious freedom in a house church shut down by authorities near the city of Nanyang in central China's Henan province, June 4, 2018. AP Photo / Ng Han Guan**

The assignment always promised to be a challenge: talk with Christians in China about a state crackdown on their faith when many are afraid to speak out for fear of government retribution.

When reporter Yanan Wang, photographer Han Guan Ng and video journalist Emily Wang visited cities in China's Christian heartland, they discovered the government's campaign to "Sinicize" Christianity was far more aggressive than previously known. Hundreds of informal churches in private homes were shuttered. Gatherings were raided. Bibles were seized. Authorities ordered posters of Jesus replaced with portraits of President Xi Jinping.

For careful, persistent reporting to expose what experts and activists described as the most severe systematic repression of Christianity since religious freedom was written into the Chinese constitution in 1982, the three win this week's Beat of the Week.

The push to "Sinicize" Christianity is part of Xi's larger effort to infuse religions with "Chinese characteristics," such as loyalty to the Communist Party.

Christians they interviewed were eager to tell their stories, but most did not want their names used, concerned they'd be punished. A few, however, allowed part of their names to be used in spite of the risk. The team saw the risks up-close. At one point, about 20 plainclothes officers surrounded them as they interviewed a source on private property. The AP journalists found themselves detained briefly and questioned. Then, they were tailed as they drove to another city.

The push to "Sinicize" Christianity is part of Xi's larger effort to infuse religions with "Chinese characteristics," such as loyalty to the Communist Party. The party has long been wary of Christianity because of its association with Western political values. When the AP's China News Director Gillian Wong saw reports of a crackdown in Chinese Christian news outlets, citing anonymous believers, she suggested that Yanan Wang pursue the story.

As Wang began reporting, she immediately encountered the pervasive fear among Christians about government reprisals. Several pastors at house churches told her they could not talk on the phone, concerned that their lines were being monitored.

They suggested she go to Henan province, the Christian heartland, to witness the impact of the crackdown firsthand. The team went door-to-door to churches to find anyone who would be willing to talk. They dug through the rubble of a demolished church to find a contact's phone number. They found the number written on an internal newsletter from more than two years ago and tucked into a folder that had been left behind.

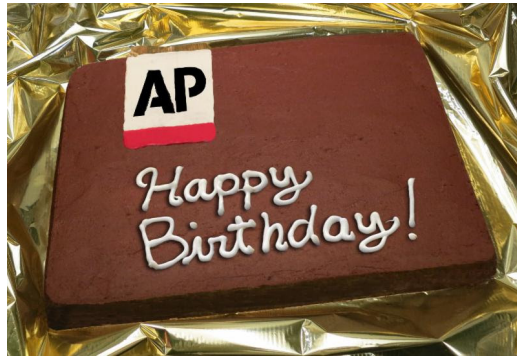
Believers told them that the authorities' approach to the faith shifted dramatically this year. In the spring, a plan to "Sinicize" Christianity was introduced. Over the last several months, hundreds of house churches have been shut down.

Han Guan Ng and Emily Wang had the difficult task of getting photos and video in a place where the sight of cameras can arouse suspicion. They had to make repeated trips to one church, for instance, to get a pastor on camera because he would not answer his phone, fearing government monitoring. Emily Wang, working with video journalist Brian Skoloff, was able to fill out the story with additional interviews with Chinese Christians now living in the U.S.

Dozens of members and customers used AP's coverage of this little-known campaign. The story was retweeted more than 1,000 times and garnered more than 5,000 engagements on Facebook. On APNews.com, the story netted more than 26,000 page views.

For their intrepid reporting in the face of government pressure, the team of Wang, Ng and Wang wins this week's \$500 Beat of the Week prize.

# Welcome to Connecting



Martha Raffaele - [martha.raffaele@yahoo.com](mailto:martha.raffaele@yahoo.com)

## Stories of interest

***Demise of print newspapers may have far-reaching consequences for communities and the nation*** (The Hill)

**BY RICHARD BENEDETTO, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR**

For those of us who still love getting our news from newspapers, those inky, crinkly, thin sheets of wood pulp you hold in your hands and read, these indeed are sad times. Print newspapers, thanks in large part to the meteoric rise of smartphones and online and social media, are in serious decline.

That decline is even more dramatic in places where they are are needed most - the villages, towns and smaller cities across America where print newspapers have long been a key link to the community.

In the short four-year period between 2012 and 2016, the number of daily newspapers in the United States fell from 1,425 in 2012 to 1,286 in 2016.

And the print decimation continues. In late June, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette published a long explanation of why it is cutting the weekly number of days it prints

from seven to five. The stated reason in a letter to union employees, those most-hurt by the cutback: "We have decided that becoming a digital newspaper is our future."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac, Paul Shane, Ed Williams.

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## ***Gazette reporter in '57 crisis dies; journalist, others shielded Eckford as crowd jeered Little Rock Nine student*** (Arkansas Democrat Gazette)



Arkansas Gazette reporter Jerry Dhonau (far left) is among journalists helping to shield Elizabeth Eckford from the angry crowd Sept. 4, 1957, as she waits for a bus during the Little Rock Central High Crisis.

By **BILL BOWDEN**



Jerry Dhonau, whose reporting at Little Rock's Central High School during the school desegregation crisis in 1957 helped the Arkansas Gazette win a Pulitzer Prize, died Friday in Albuquerque, N.M., said his daughter Stephanie Dhonau of Little Rock.

Dhonau was 83. His daughter said he died of natural causes. He had been ill off and on since March.

As one of the youngest reporters at the Gazette in 1957, Dhonau stayed at the school every day for a couple of months and "recorded the events that attracted world attention and created the greatest constitutional crisis since the Civil War," wrote Ernie Dumas, a colleague of Dhonau's, in an obituary submitted to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

Eventually, President Dwight Eisenhower federalized the Arkansas National Guard and sent the 101st Airborne Division to the school to ensure that it was desegregated.

Dhonau and another young reporter, Ray Moseley, were responsible for most of the Gazette's coverage of the events at Central High School and at the state Capitol during that period, wrote Dumas. The Gazette won two Pulitzer Prizes that year, one for editorials on the school crisis and one for exceptional community service.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Sylvia Wingfield.

## Today in History - August 20, 2018



**By The Associated Press**

Today is Monday, Aug. 20, the 232nd day of 2018. There are 133 days left in the year.

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

On August 20, 1953, the Soviet Union publicly acknowledged it had tested a hydrogen bomb.

### **On this date:**

In 1866, President Andrew Johnson formally declared the Civil War over, months after fighting had stopped.

In 1910, a series of forest fires swept through parts of Idaho, Montana and Washington, killing at least 85 people and burning some 3 million acres.

In 1914, German forces occupied Brussels, Belgium, during World War I.

In 1940, during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill paid tribute to the Royal Air Force before the House of Commons, saying, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." Exiled Communist revolutionary Leon Trotsky was assassinated in Coyoacan, Mexico by Ramon Mercader. (Trotsky died the next day.)

In 1955, hundreds of people were killed in anti-French rioting in Morocco and Algeria.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act, a nearly \$1 billion anti-poverty measure.

In 1968, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations began invading Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring" liberalization drive.

In 1977, the United States launched Voyager 2, an unmanned spacecraft carrying a 12-inch, gold-plated copper phonograph record containing images, greetings in dozens of languages, samples of music and sounds of nature.

In 1986, postal employee Patrick Henry Sherrill went on a deadly rampage at a post office in Edmond, Okla., shooting 14 fellow workers to death before killing himself.

In 1988, a cease-fire in the war between Iraq and Iran went into effect.

In 1989, entertainment executive Jose Menendez and his wife, Kitty, were shot to death in their Beverly Hills mansion by their sons, Lyle and Erik. Fifty-one people died when a pleasure boat sank in the River Thames (tehms) in London after colliding with a dredger.

In 2000, Tiger Woods won the PGA Championship in a playoff over Bob May, becoming the first player since Ben Hogan in 1953 to win three majors in one year.

Ten years ago: A Spanish jetliner crashed during takeoff from Madrid, killing 154 people; 18 survived. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski signed a deal to put a U.S. missile defense base in Poland. In Beijing, Usain (yoo-SAYN') Bolt of Jamaica broke the world record by winning the 200 meters in 19.30 seconds. Former Chinese leader Hua Guofeng died in Beijing at age 87. U.S. Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones, the first black woman to represent Ohio in Congress, died in Cleveland at age 58. Gene Upshaw, executive director of the NFL Players Association, died near California's Lake Tahoe at age 63.

Five years ago: A Pakistani court indicted former president and army chief Pervez Musharraf on murder charges stemming from the assassination of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Qatar-based Al-Jazeera Media Network launched its U.S. cable news outlet, Al-Jazeera America. Crime novelist Elmore Leonard, 87, died in Bloomfield Township, Michigan. Jazz pianist Marian McPartland, 95, died in Port Washington, New York, of natural causes.

One year ago: Actor, comic and longtime telethon host Jerry Lewis died of heart disease in Las Vegas at the age of 91.

Today's Birthdays: Writer-producer-director Walter Bernstein is 99. Boxing promoter Don King is 87. Former Sen. George Mitchell, D-Maine, is 85. Former U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, is 83. Former MLB All-Star Graig Nettles is 74. Broadcast journalist Connie Chung is 72. Musician Jimmy Pankow (Chicago) is 71. Actor Ray Wise is 71. Actor John Noble is 70. Rock singer Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin) is 70. Country singer Rudy Gatlin is 66. Singer-songwriter John Hiatt is 66. Actor-director Peter Horton is 65. TV weatherman Al Roker is 64. Actor Jay Acovone is 63. Actress Joan Allen is 62. Movie director David O. Russell is 60. TV personality Asha Blake is 57. Actor James Marsters is 56. Rapper KRS-One is 53. Actor Colin Cunningham is 52. Actor Billy Gardell is 49. Rock singer Fred Durst (Limp Bizkit) is 48. Actor

Jonathan Ke Quan is 48. Rock musician Brad Avery is 47. Actor Misha Collins is 44. Rock singer Monique Powell (Save Ferris) is 43. Jazz/pop singer-pianist Jamie Cullum is 39. Actor Ben Barnes is 37. Actress Meghan Ory is 36. Actor Andrew Garfield is 35. Actor Brant Daugherty is 33. Actress-singer Demi Lovato is 26.

**Thought for Today: "Justice is conscience, not a personal conscience but the conscience of the whole of humanity." - Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Russian author (1918-2008).**

## 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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