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Connecting -- August 28, 2018

1 message

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Tue, Aug 28, 2018 at 8:57 AM

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Connecting

August 28, 2018

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Sen. John McCain took his presidential campaign to the 2008 AP Annual Meeting in Washington and addresses the group in this photo by AP's Mary Altaffer. But it was a box of donuts that really loosened him up - read story in today's edition.

Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning!

The recent release of Spike Lee's movie *BlacKkKlansman*, about a black police detective who infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan, hit home for Connecting colleague **Bill Vogrin**.

Bill wrote a column on the detective, Ron Stallworth, when he was working for *The Gazette* in Colorado Springs, a newspaper he joined after 13 years of reporting for the AP as a Kansas City newsman, Topeka statehouse reporter and Peoria correspondent. He worked for *The Gazette* from 1994 to 2015 when he bought two weekly Colorado papers. *The Gazette* bought the papers from him 18 months later and Bill joined the Colorado Parks and Wildlife department as a public information officer.

Bill and his wife Cary caught the movie this past weekend and offers his impressions in today's *Connecting*. He gives the movie a Thumbs Up but issues a Spoiler Alert for anyone who plans to see the movie.

Have a great day!

Paul

A Colorado reporter's view of Spike Lee's new movie, *BlacKkKlansman*

Bill Vogrin (Email) - On Saturday night, my wife Cary and I finally made it to the theater to see *BlacKkKlansman*, a new Spike Lee film about Ron Stallworth, Colorado Springs' first black police detective who improbably infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan and even befriended David Duke, a former Louisiana state lawmaker and Grand Wizard of the KKK.

Going in, I knew the plot of the movie because I wrote about Stallworth and his amazing story in 2014 in my column for the Colorado Springs Gazette.

In fact, I have enjoyed seeing all the hoopla over Stallworth and the film.

I was curious to see how closely Lee would stick to the storyline of Stallworth's memoir "Black Klansman," a 180-page book published by Police and Fire Publishing of Santa Ana, Calif.

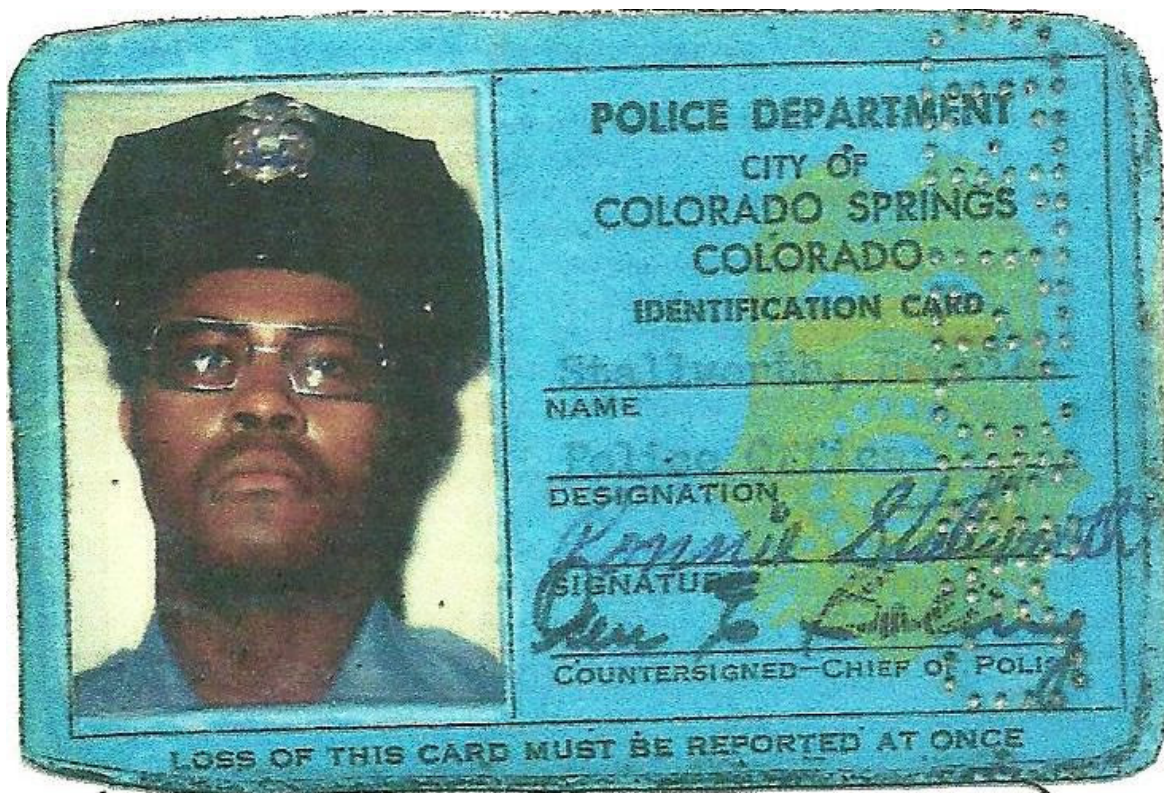
My verdict? You'll get no rotten tomatoes from me. I give it two thumbs up.

I was surprised how true the movie stayed to the book, even while taking significant artistic liberties to make political statements. Lee also exercised his dramatic license by adding the bombing and deaths that provided a climax to the film.



I had learned of Stallworth in January 2014 after I wandered into the museum of the African-American Historical and Genealogical Society of Colorado Springs. It is a

modest museum, housed in a former classroom of a century-old school building.



On a display inside, I was shocked to see Stallworth's photo and his Klan membership card from 1979. I tracked Stallworth down in Utah, where he was living in retirement, and learned he had a memoir coming out.

I held off publishing my column May 21, 2014, in deference to Stallworth, who wanted any publicity he received to coincide with the book's release.

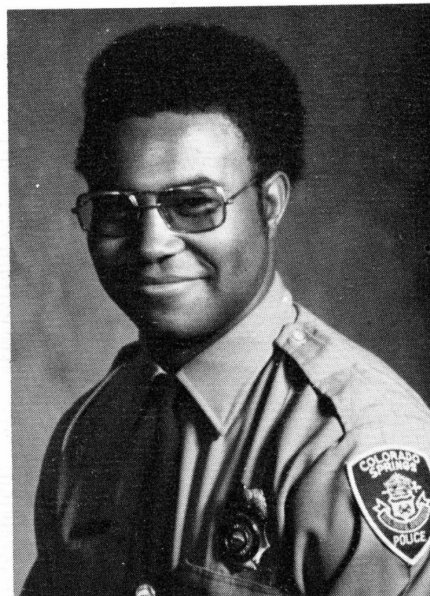
Here's my quick impressions of the film. Stallworth contacted the Klan by mail, not a phone call initially. But that's not a big deal. The character of Flip did not exist in the book. Stallworth never fully identified the colleague who met the Klan in person and exposed himself to the danger of physically infiltrating the hate group.

Stallworth did, indeed, befriend Duke over the phone and even met him during the visit to Colorado Springs, as portrayed in the movie. But there was no Klan initiation ceremony as Lee depicted. It was a simple restaurant meeting of Klan officials.

Stallworth did go undercover at a Stokely Carmichael speech and admitted in his book he found himself agreeing with Carmichael on some points and he came away conflicted about issues the former Black Panther raised. But, as Lee showed, Stallworth rejected Carmichael's warning to prepare for a race war.

While Stallworth did attend an event of the Colorado College Black Student Union, he never had a romance with its female president. The character was a creation of Lee along with the police harassment of Carmichael after the speech.

Stallworth did uncover Klan members who were working at NORAD -- the highly sensitive North American Aerospace Defense Command. And he thwarted planned cross-burnings and other KKK terror events, thanks to the intelligence he gained.



Ronnie Stallworth

The biggest Lee creation, though, was the bombing that left three Klan members dead and another headed to prison. It never happened. Nor did the feel-good moment at the end when Stallworth is shown giving Duke his comeuppance over the phone.



And while it's true the police chief intervened in hazing Stallworth received in real life, there was no undercover sting of a racist colleague as Lee portrayed.

As for Colorado Springs itself, there are brief glimpses of the city in the film, notably the Garden of the Gods and downtown. But I didn't recognize most of the outdoor settings. They were too urban-industrial and the scenes included waterways that don't exist here.

But it was fun to watch and certainly delivered a gut-punch of a message about life in America today that echoed loudly through Stallworth's own life experiences.

You can read my original column [here](#).

A box of donuts loosened up candidate

John McCain at 2008 AP Annual Meeting



Appearing at the 2008 AP Annual Meeting in Washington, Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain holds up a box of Dunkin' Donuts presented to him by

Associated Press political reporter Liz Sidoti, as a reference to what is often eaten on McCain's "Straight Talk Express" campaign bus. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

Chuck Zoeller shared this and other photos with Connecting colleagues and recalls McCain got a big laugh when he displayed the donuts, calling it "our new health plan."



Tom Curley, AP president and CEO at the time, recalled, "When I met him and accompanied him to the presentation, he was very tight. Efforts at chit-chat were difficult. He got on stage, reacted to the donuts and was lively and lucid. Night and day personality change in a few minutes." Curley is shown above welcoming McCain. AP board chairman Dean Singleton is at right. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

Remembering John McCain - a regular guy with no pretensions, easy to talk to

Bill Kaczor ([Email](#)) - My contacts with Sen. John McCain were limited but memorable. I called his office in 1997 to see if I could talk to him about a 30th anniversary story I was doing on the devastating fire aboard the USS Forrestal

during the Vietnam War. A short time later, McCain, who was traveling, called me from an airport and we spoke for several minutes.

The fire, which killed 134 crew members and injured many others including McCain, had been caused when a Zuni rocket accidentally fired from an F-4 Phantom II. The F4 and other planes, all armed with bombs and missiles, were on the flight deck preparing to take off on a bombing mission. McCain told me the rocket hit an external fuel tank on his A-4 Skyhawk, a claim he has consistently made over the years. I have since found out the official Navy investigation concluded the rocket hit the Skyhawk parked next to his. Some have speculated it may have hit both planes. In any case, the Zuni went through whatever it had hit without exploding before heading out to sea, but fuel aboard both Skyhawks caught on fire.

McCain dropped 10 feet to the deck and rolled through the flames to escape the blaze. He was trying to help another pilot who also escaped from his jet but was engulfed in flames. That's when intense heat set off a bomb that had gotten loose. "It went off in a tremendous explosion and knocked me back about 10 feet," McCain told me. "I got some shrapnel in my legs and chest." The pilot he was trying to help and a sailor who had been aiming a fire extinguisher at the bomb were killed. The crew eventually extinguished the flames and saved the ship although it was badly damaged. "I always think of those brave young men, most of them 18 or 19 years old, who fought as if they were in hand-to-hand combat, and saved the ship and saved the lives of their shipmates," McCain told me.

Some time after that McCain was in Pensacola for an event I can't even recall. I must have either not written about it or called in a quote or two for a broader story written elsewhere. McCain had some down time and I had a chance to chat with him. I don't remember the details, but we probably spoke about his time in Pensacola during the early part of his Navy career. I do, though, remember being impressed with how he seemed like just a regular guy - no pretensions and easy to talk with.

When McCain first ran for president in 2000, I was tasked with doing a story on his divorce 20 years earlier because it had been filed in the Florida Panhandle. McCain at the time had a home near Jacksonville and his lawyer practiced in the Panhandle county where the divorce was filed. His attorney was George "Bud" Day, another former POW who had been one of McCain's first cellmates at the Hanoi Hilton right after he was shot down. McCain and Day, who won the Medal of Honor for escaping from North Vietnam only to be recaptured by the Viet Cong when he made it South Vietnam, were fast friends. The divorce settlement I obtain showed McCain had been very generous to his first wife. Of course, he could afford to be. Shortly after the divorce he married his second wife, whose family owned a large beer distribution business in Arizona.

Amanda Kell leaves AP after 28 years, becomes new senior content editor at

The Baltimore Sun

Amanda Kell (Email) - longtime Maryland-Delaware news editor for The Associated Press, has been named senior content editor at The Baltimore Sun, where she will help coordinate daily and enterprise coverage. She begins her new job September 10.

"The mission, reach and staff of AP are unparalleled," she told Connecting. "To have worked here for 28 years - longer than anything I've done, except be alive - has been a privilege."

In announcing her departure, Ravi Nessman, AP South Region news director, said, "Amanda is a true news warrior, and a real journalist in the best sense of the word. She wants a part of every big story and is always willing to pitch in and fill gaps. She will be missed the day she leaves, and when the next big story breaks, we will mourn our loss all over again."



Steve McMillan, AP Mid-Atlantic news editor in Richmond, agreed: "Amanda, in so many ways, is the glue that holds this place together, from quickly and calmly mobilizing for breaking news like the Annapolis newspaper and Great Mills school shooting, to launching the AP's Capital News Service partnership with the University of Maryland, to diving in for four months this year on the team to ferret out fake news while still keeping one eye on the Mid-Atlantic. She has been an invaluable sounding board for me and I know for all of you in sculpting story ideas, identifying sources and key documents and lining up the appropriate visuals."

Kell joined the AP in 1991 as an editorial assistant in Richmond, worked as a night supervisor, spent six years as a broadcast editor and 17 years as a news editor. As news editor in Maryland/DC/Delaware she quarterbacked coverage of the DC sniper attacks, Freddie Gray and the court martial of Chelsea Manning and oversaw the reporting and writing of the award-winning piece of national enterprise about John Hinckley as the reality of his imminent release from the Washington mental hospital became clear.

Beyond her skills as an editor," McMillan said, "Amanda has a big heart. She sends flowers to breaking news staffers who have babies, puts together antipasto party trays for retiring staffers and even drives to their towns across the state to take them to dinner."

Connecting colleague Dorothy Abernathy said she worked closely with Kell when she was bureau chief in Mid-Atlantic and later as director of local markets for the Washington-Baltimore region. Abernathy said, "I found Amanda to be a smart editor and a good manager. She stayed amazingly calm under pressure. I admired her, and so did her staff. She'll be missed."

Connecting mailbox

Daily Life in Maine, as Photographed by AP's Robert F. Bukaty



A puffin prepares to land with a bill full of fish on Eastern Egg Rock off the Maine coast on July 1, 2013. Photo/Robert Bukaty

By ALAN TAYLOR

Robert F. Bukaty has been working as a photographer for the Associated Press since 1993, and was a member of the AP team that won the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for its coverage of President Clinton's impeachment. However, Bukaty's many photographs of everyday life in the state of Maine, where he is based, are a constant source of joy and wonder. The images are beautifully made portraits of Maine's people, its landscape, its wildlife, and, of course, its ever-changing seasons.

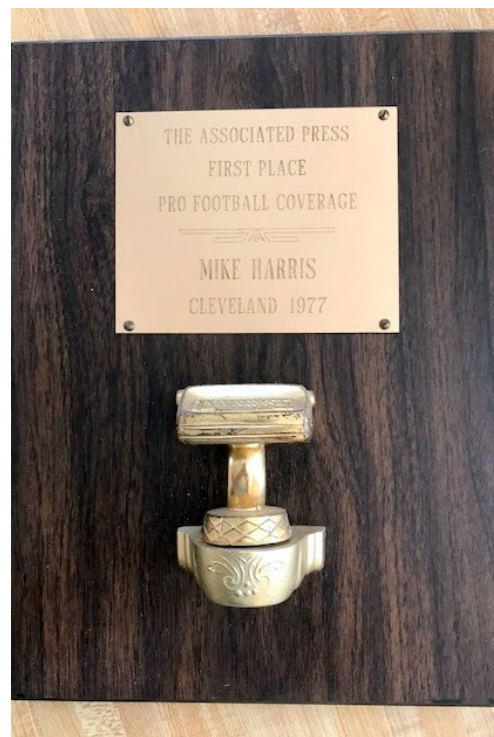
Gathered here, moving from spring to winter, is a collection of some of his Maine photography from the past few years.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Craig Armstrong. Robert Bukaty is based in the AP's Portland, Maine, bureau.

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Proud of NFL play competition with UPI

Mike Harris ([Email](#)) - During my early years with AP, the rivalry with UPI was often quite exciting, quite competitive and a lot of fun. One of my favorite competitions with UPI was during my five years in Cleveland in the late 70s. NY Sports kept a weekly log of the competitive play on NFL games, watching the 25 or 30 papers nationally that had both services. On Monday or Tuesday of each NFL week, we would get a listing of how each of AP's football writers did against their UPI counterpart and against their AP colleagues, along with a comment or two. Until I left for NY Sports and the auto beat in 1980, I never finished worse than fourth in the football competition and I won it in 1977. The very prized plaque hangs on my office wall, along with other awards, honors and prized pictures.



During the 1979 NFL season, the Browns played host to the Dallas Cowboys on a Monday night. Sports Editor Wick Temple asked Judy and me to fly to NY on that Tuesday to talk about taking over the auto beat the next year. I covered the game, which was an upset win by the Browns, got home about 3 in the morning and we were on a plane to Laguardia by 9 a.m. When we walked into NY Sports that afternoon, I got a standing ovation that quickly cleared my groggy head. Until then, I had no idea, but I had won the play on the game 14-0. It was certainly a highlight of my early career.

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AP logo sighting...



Larry Hamlin ([Email](#)) - Frame grab from the Little League World Series championship game (baseball at its finest)... The South Korean (Asia Pacific) players are wearing AP hats!

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More of your favorite datelines

Harry Atkins ([Email](#)) - Taking high school scores on Tuesday and Friday nights wasn't as much fun as you might think. So, in Detroit we sometimes amused ourselves by making up imaginary teams. You could, for example, make up a pretty fair girls basketball team using Michigan datelines. Ann Arbor and Hazel Park were the forwards, Beverly Hills was the center while Marion Springs and Madison Heights were the guards. Well, maybe you just had to be there.

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Richard Horwitz (Email) - I'd like to nominate Chicken, Alaska, for unusual datelines. It's a gold mining community east of Fairbanks. When a post office was established in 1902, a town name was needed. The preferred name was Ptarmigan, after the bird that is common in the area, but people were unsure of the spelling.

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Charles Richards (Email) - In the Aug. 1 "Connecting," Mike Holmes spoke of Mike Graczyk's knack for getting stories on the A Wire.

"One thing I learned from him - find a good dateline. Texas was full of them, and Mike's byline appeared over some of the best: Dime Box, Muleshoe, Cut and Shoot, and of course, Gun Barrel City. General Desk editors just couldn't resist," Holmes wrote.

I was the West Texas correspondent for UPI on Friday, March 31, 1967, when I received a tip from one of our member newspapers that a farmer in the Texas Panhandle was claiming a UFO about 100 feet long and eight to 10 feet high landed on his place that evening.

The next morning, a Saturday, I drove about three hours to the site about 25 miles north of Childress (halfway between Amarillo and Wichita Falls) to interview the farmer, Carroll Watts.

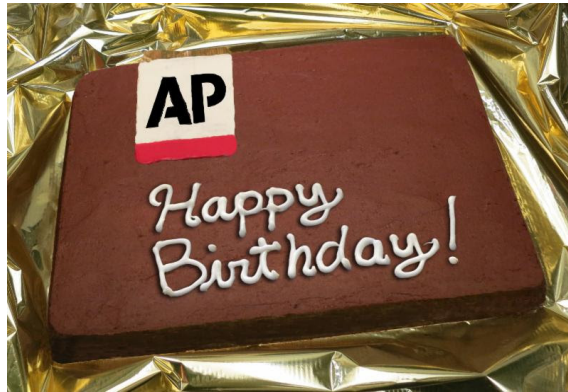
Imagine my delight when I discovered the farm was located in an unincorporated community by the name of Loco.

Watts told me that when he drove in his pickup to investigate, "a voice" from the fluorescent craft invited him aboard. He declined, he said, and the craft lifted silently and zoomed away. About 10 days earlier, he said, he had seen perhaps the same cigar-shaped UFO flying at about 50 mph over a road for about eight miles. He showed me pictures he said he took of the craft.

A couple of hours later, I was in the office of the Childress Index, writing a story that I dictated to UPI Dallas.

The dateline, of course, was LOCO, TEXAS. That alone probably accounted significantly to the play the exclusive got in Sunday morning newspapers both statewide and nationally.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

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Randy Evans - revans2810@aol.com

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Stories of interest

Pittsburgh becomes largest US city without a daily print newspaper (The Hill)

By JOE CONCHA

Pittsburgh will hold the distinction of being the largest city in the U.S. without a daily print newspaper after the city's Post-Gazette informed readers it will cut its production schedule from seven days a week to five beginning this weekend.

The Post-Gazette, which launched 232 years ago and is one of the oldest newspapers in the country, had originally indicated in June the cutback would eventually be happening while noting the digital edition of the paper will continue.

"It's the year 2018, and with the way people review and expect to review information and news, we think we're doing the right thing," said Keith Wilkowski, vice president

of legal and government affairs for Block Communications Inc., the company based in Toledo, Ohio, that owns the Post-Gazette, on June 27.

"We will be publishing a (digital) newspaper seven days a week," Wilkowski added. "And, frankly, we reach more people via online than through the print publication."

Read more [here](#). Shared by John Willis, Paul Shane.

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In Liberal Wine Country, Turning Newspaper Readers Into Shareholders (New York Times)



"I knew we had to do something different," said Rollie Atkinson, who hopes to raise \$400,000 by selling stock to readers of his four weekly newspapers in Sonoma County, Calif. Photo: Cayce Clifford for The New York Times

By TIM ARANGO

HEALDSBURG, Calif. - The town square here feels as if it is from a bygone era: lush greenery, redwoods and palm trees, a bakery that sells its famed sticky buns each morning, a more-than-a-century-old inn that proclaims its "wine country warmth."

It is also the sort of place, with an abundance of wealth and aging baby boomers, that loves its local newspaper.

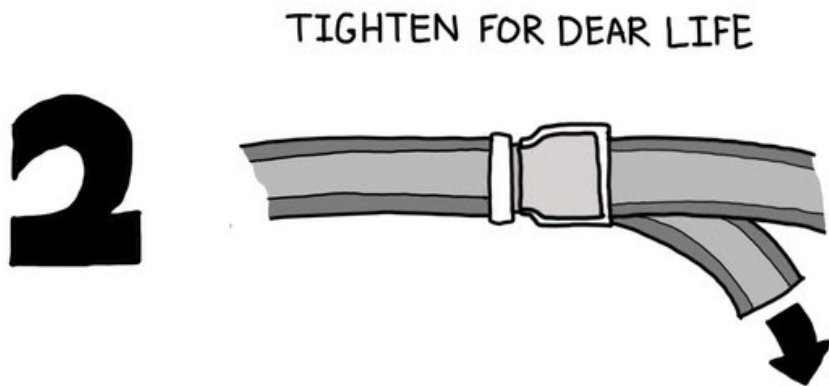
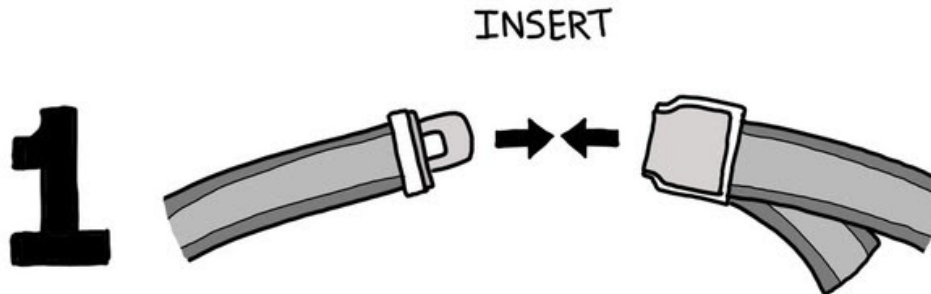
Even so, last year Rollie Atkinson, the owner and publisher of The Healdsburg Tribune and three other weeklies in Sonoma County, was staring down a grim financial reality. The business model, he said, was "failing rapidly." He was tired of throwing his savings into the newspapers to keep them going, and weary of the "daily struggle" of staying afloat in an environment where readers have access to a torrent of information for free.

"I knew we had to do something different," he said.

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

The Final Word

HOW TO WATCH THE NEWS



Shared by Bob Daugherty

Today in History - August 28, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 28, the 240th day of 2018. There are 125 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 28, 1963, more than 200,000 people listened as the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

On this date:

In 1609, English sea explorer Henry Hudson and his ship, the Half Moon, reached present-day Delaware Bay.

In 1862, the Second Battle of Bull Run (also known as Second Manassas) began in Prince William County, Virginia, during the Civil War; the result was a Confederate victory.

In 1916, Italy declared war on Germany during World War I.

In 1941, Japan's ambassador to the U.S., Kichisaburo Nomura, presented a note to President Franklin D. Roosevelt from Japan's prime minister, Prince Fumimaro Konoye, expressing a desire for improved relations.

In 1955, Emmett Till, a black teen-ager from Chicago, was abducted from his uncle's home in Money, Mississippi, by two white men after he had supposedly whistled at a white woman; he was found brutally slain three days later.

In 1968, police and anti-war demonstrators clashed in the streets of Chicago as the Democratic National Convention nominated Hubert H. Humphrey for president.

In 1972, Mark Spitz of the United States won the first two of his seven gold medals at the Munich Olympics, finishing first in the 200-meter butterfly and anchoring the 400-meter freestyle relay. The Soviet women gymnasts won the team all-around.

In 1988, 70 people were killed when three Italian stunt planes collided during an air show at the U.S. Air Base in Ramstein (RAHM'-shtyn), West Germany.

In 1990, an F5 tornado struck the Chicago area, killing 29 people.

In 1995, a mortar shell tore through a crowded market in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, killing some three dozen people and triggering NATO airstrikes against the Bosnian Serbs.

In 1996, Democrats nominated President Bill Clinton for a second term at their national convention in Chicago. The troubled 15-year marriage of Britain's Prince Charles and Princess Diana officially ended with the issuing of a divorce decree.

In 2005, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin (NAY'-gin) ordered everyone in the city to evacuate after Hurricane Katrina grew to a monster storm.

Ten years ago: Surrounded by an enormous, adoring crowd at Invesco Field in Denver, Barack Obama accepted the Democratic presidential nomination, promising what he called a clean break from the "broken politics in Washington and the failed policies of George W. Bush." Former U.S. Marine Jose Luis Nazario Jr., accused of killing unarmed Iraqi detainees in the Iraqi city of Fallujah, was acquitted of voluntary manslaughter in Riverside, Calif.

Five years ago: A military jury sentenced Maj. Nidal Hasan to death for the 2009 shooting rampage at Fort Hood that claimed 13 lives. On the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial, President Barack Obama stood on the same steps as he challenged new generations to seize the cause of racial equality.

One year ago: Floodwaters reached the rooflines of single-story homes as Hurricane Harvey poured rain on the Houston area for a fourth consecutive day; thousands of people had been rescued from the flooding. The Navy said divers had recovered the remains of all 10 sailors who had been missing after the USS John S. McCain and an oil tanker collided near Singapore nearly a week earlier.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Sonny Shroyer is 83. Actress Marla Adams is 80. Actor Ken Jenkins is 78. Former Defense Secretary William S. Cohen is 78. Actor David Soul is 75. Former pop singer-musician Honey Lantree (The Honeycombs) is 75. Former MLB manager and player Lou Piniella is 75. Actress Barbara Bach is 72. Actress Debra Mooney is 71. Singer Wayne Osmond (The Osmonds) is 67. Actor Daniel Stern is 61. Olympic gold medal figure skater Scott Hamilton is 60. Actor John Allen Nelson is 59. Actress Emma Samms is 58. Actress Jennifer Coolidge is 57. Movie director David Fincher is 56. Actress Amanda Tapping is 53. Country singer Shania (shah-NY'-uh) Twain is 53. Actor Billy Boyd is 50. Actor Jack Black is 49. Actor Jason Priestley is 49. Actor Daniel Goddard (TV: "The Young and the Restless") is 47. Olympic gold medal swimmer Janet Evans is 47. Actor J. August Richards is 45. Rock singer-musician Max Collins (Eve 6) is 40. Actress Carly Pope is 38. Country singer Jake Owen is 37. Country singer LeAnn Rimes is 36. Actress Kelly Thiebaud is 36. Actor Alfonso Herrera is 35. Actress Sarah Roemer is 34. Actor Armie Hammer is 32. Rock singer Florence Welch (Florence and the Machine) is 32. Actress Shalita Grant is 30. Country-pop singer Cassadee Pope (TV: "The Voice") is 29. Actress Katie Findlay is 28. Actor/singer Samuel Larsen is 27. Actor Kyle Massey is 27. Actress Quvenzhane (kwuh-VEHN'-zhah-nay) Wallis is 15. Reality TV star Alana Thompson, AKA "Honey Boo Boo," is 13.

Thought for Today: "The man who views the world at fifty the same as he did at twenty has wasted thirty years of his life." - Muhammad Ali, American boxing champion (1942-2016).

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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