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Connecting - December 14, 2018

1 message

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Fri, Dec 14, 2018 at 9:38 AM

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December 14, 2018

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Colleagues,

The photo above was taken 15 years ago this month - at the annual meeting of AP Kansas and Missouri members in Kansas City, one of the most special ones ever held since the event began back in 1946.

Tom Curley came out from New York in his new role as AP president and CEO to be our featured speaker. Pulitzer Prize-winner **Walter Mears** was there to speak to the group on politics of the day. **Beth Grace** presided at her first meeting as Kansas City chief of bureau, replacing me when I was named one of four regional vice presidents.

Of the 23 people in the photo, 10 continue to work for The Associated Press.

Here's a Who's Who in the photo: front row, from left: David Lieb, Roxana Hegeman, Margaret Stafford, Tom Curley, Jim Suhr and Jim Clarke. Back row, from left: Connie Farrow, Jenelle Stamper, Kia Breaux, Beth Grace, Charlie Riedel, Laura Rauch, David Scott, Robert Shaw, Rob Sandler, Paul Stevens, Jim Salter, Walter Mears, Libby Quaid, Scott Charton, John Hanna, Orlin Wagner and Cliff Schiappa.

Those still on active duty with the AP: Lieb, Jefferson City correspondent; Hegeman, Wichita correspondent; Stafford, Kansas City newswoman; Clarke, West regional director; Breaux, Central regional director; Riedel, Kansas City photographer; Scott, deputy managing editor in New York; Salter, St. Louis correspondent; Hanna, Topeka correspondent, and Wagner, Kansas City photographer.

Thanks for letting me share these memories. Most everyone pictured, btw, are among the Connecting family.

We lead today's issue with a reaction to Thursday's lead story on the use of Artificial Intelligence in the AP report.

Have a great weekend!

Paul

AI at The Associated Press

Norman Abelson ([Email](#)) - I read with interest, and a bit of foreboding, the article about The AP's new use of artificial intelligence (AI).

There always seems to be a push-back against anything new; maybe it's a human inclination to fight progress. I know the AI piece hit me that way, at least at first. Heck, I thought, we haven't done much of a job yet with intelligence; now we're going to use a set of algorithms to represent it.

I set out to remember the times past when I had the same queasy feeling about change.

Working in a two-person AP office, I had to be puncher as well as reporter. A two-finger guy, which I am to this day, the shift from teletype to teletypesetter was quite traumatic. And that's to say nothing about going from manual to electric typewriter and then - horrors! - computer. And how about trying to read a "newspaper" online.

Here's some other stuff that's made me wonder about "progress":

Driverless cars/trucks/buses/etc., drone delivery, computer-driven airliners (I took my flying lessons on a hands-on Cessna four-seater), persistent cell phone buzzing, frozen pizza, skim milk, Facebook, Elon Musk, candy bars costing \$1.49, kale ice cream, fruit-flavored vodka, home exercise machines, computerized voting, \$12,000 funerals, bar mitzvas on Bimini, telephone polling, atonal music, Tweets, bit coins,

All of this made me consider seriously what Havelock Ellis, intellectual and social reformer, once said: "What we call progress is the exchange of one nuisance for another nuisance."

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Sandy Johnson ([Email](#)) - The National Press Foundation recently produced a four-day training program for journalists on all facets of artificial intelligence, and one of the speakers was the Washington Post's manager for AI-created content. It was a pretty tense discussion with the journalists. Here's what he had to say: Artificial Intelligence in the News Industry - National Press Foundation. Click [here](#) to view.

Associated Press National Politics Reporter Wins 'Jeopardy'



By JON LEVINE, TheWrap

Elana Schor, a national politics reporter for the Associated Press, became the latest "Jeopardy" champion on Wednesday evening, dethroning travel agent Nicole Cocklin.

"AP congratulates reporter Elana Schor for winning 'Jeopardy' last night, and we are rooting for her as she continues to compete," the company said in a statement to TheWrap.

The final winner remained an open question going into final jeopardy, with longtime host Alex Trebek revealing the category "Sci-Fi TV."

"One of the twin planets this alien race called home was Remus," Trebek said, reading out the clue. The answer - of course - is "Star Trek's" "Romulans." A correct response from Schor along with a hefty \$8,001 wager put her over the top.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

Connecting sky shot - Ocean City



Ed Tobias ([Email](#)) - I had to get up at the crack of dawn, Thursday morning, to make a trip to DC. Getting up early isn't something that I enjoy, but this morning the view from our place in Ocean City, MD made it a little easier to take.

Connecting series: Holiday traditions



Jim Reindl ([Email](#)) - If you decide to do a holiday greeting photos edition, here's my unsolicited contribution. Though it's a year old, the sentiments are the same. Anyway, every Tropical Christmas here is the same!

Ron Nixon named AP international investigations editor

AP Global Investigations Editor **Michael Hudson** announced a key appointment Thursday, sending this memo to staff:

Colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that Ron Nixon will be joining AP as international investigations editor. He'll be based in Washington and manage a global team with reporters based in D.C., London, Cairo, New Delhi and Shanghai, and he'll work closely with colleagues around the globe to conduct ambitious investigative and accountability reporting on a variety of topics.

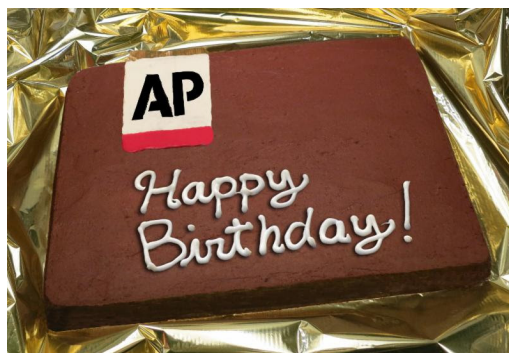
Ron comes to us from The New York Times Washington bureau. As the Times' homeland security correspondent, he's covered border and aviation security, immigration, cybercrime, transnational corruption and violent extremism for nearly a decade. He has a track record of great international journalism, reporting in recent years from Mexico, Belgium, Rwanda, Uganda, Senegal, South Africa, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo, among other places. Ron is the author of the book "Selling Apartheid: Apartheid South Africa's Global Propaganda War" and is the co-founder of the Ida B. Wells Society, which trains journalists of color in investigative reporting.



Ron Nixon

Read more [here](#).

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Glenn Adams - adamsgjrr1@gmail.com

On Saturday to...

John Strachan - strachanjohna@aol.com

Stories of interest

The news is dying, but journalism will not - and should not (Nieman)

By HOSSEIN DERAKHSAN

The core crisis of journalism is not about business models, quality, ethics, or trust. It is that news, the heart of journalism, is dying. It is losing its cultural relevance after almost two centuries - and thereby its commodity value.

News was a cultural invention, according to media scholar James W. Carey, that emerged at a specific time and space for particular needs.

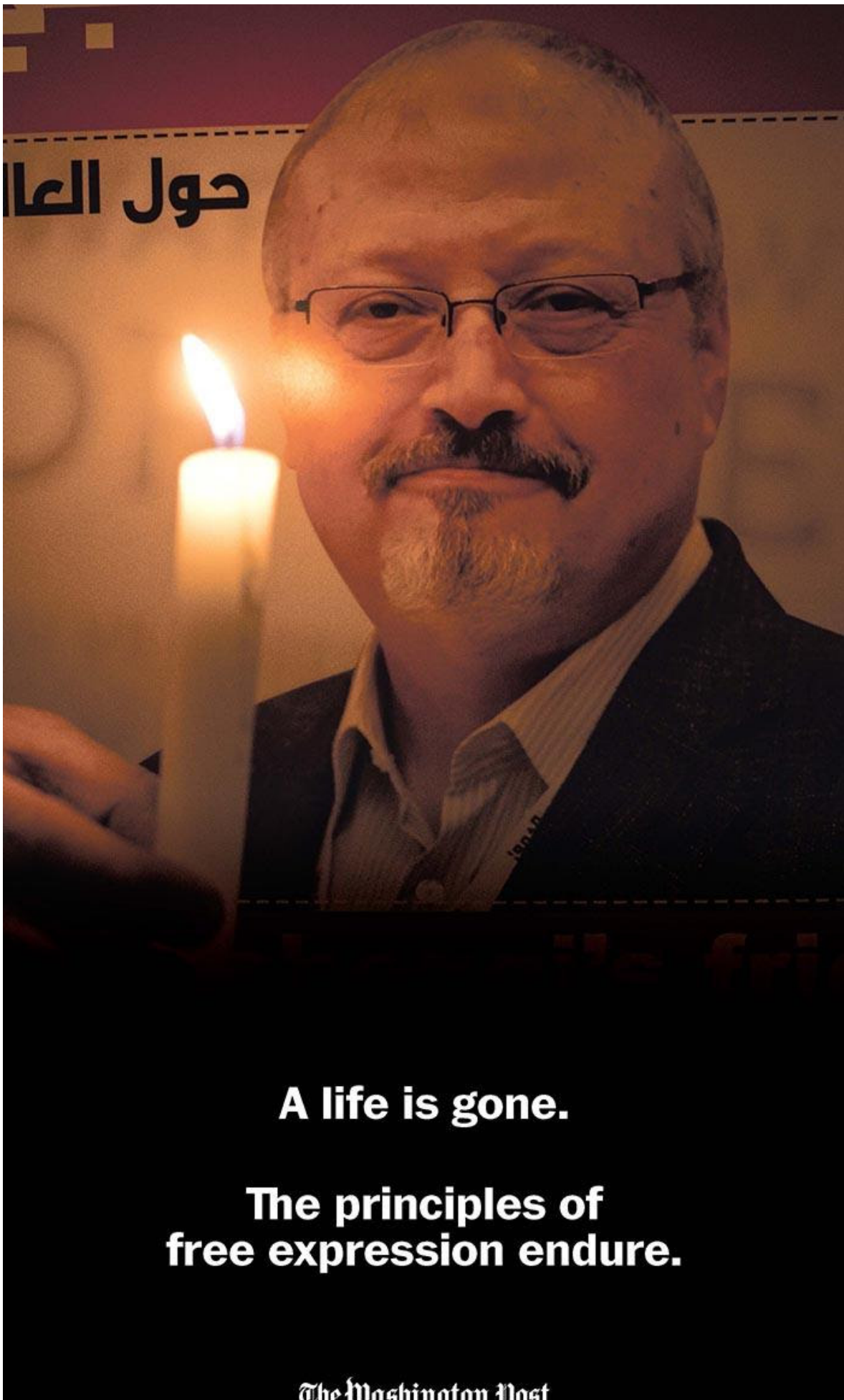
It was at the dawn of globalization when telegraph technology began to fundamentally change the way news was gathered and produced. Suddenly the world grew bigger after the break away from time and space which telegraph caused. The telegraph "allowed symbols to move independently and faster than transportation," wrote Carey. The small but quickly expanding population of literate citizens started to situate itself in a wider world of earthly, timely, specific, and real events, rather than the mythical, epic, imaginary, and the general universe of fiction.

Now after the invention of global satellite televisions, affordable international air travel, and of course the internet and social media, news has lost its monopoly on the sense of globally it once generated.

Read more [here](#).

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Post ad draws attention to death of columnist



A life is gone.

**The principles of
free expression endure.**

The Washington Post

Politico Morning Media:

THE WASHINGTON POST IS RUNNING a full-page ad today "drawing attention to the death of columnist Jamal Khashoggi, part of a broader push that publisher Fred Ryan told POLITICO would continue 'until meaningful action is taken' over Saudi Arabia's role in the killing," reports Jason Schwartz.

- "In a year-end memo to staff Wednesday, Ryan blistered the U.S. administration over its efforts to brush past Khashoggi's killing, which U.S. intelligence believes was ordered by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman," he writes.

- "Many people are frustrated and feel betrayed by the Trump administration's apparent effort to sweep Jamal's killing under the rug and its failure to stand up for America's values," Ryan wrote in the memo. "They can be assured that The Washington Post will not rest until justice is served on those who ordered Jamal's killing, those who carried it out, and those who continue to try to cover it up."

Today in History - December 14, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Dec. 14, the 348th day of 2018. There are 17 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 14, 2012, a gunman with a semi-automatic rifle killed 20 first-graders and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, then committed suicide as police arrived; the 20-year-old had also fatally shot his mother at their home before carrying out the attack on the school.

On this date:

In 1799, the first president of the United States, George Washington, died at his Mount Vernon, Virginia, home at age 67.

In 1819, Alabama joined the Union as the 22nd state.

In 1911, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen (ROH'-ahl AH'-mun-suhn) and his team became the first men to reach the South Pole, beating out a British expedition led by Robert F. Scott.

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson vetoed an immigration measure aimed at preventing "undesirables" and anyone born in the "Asiatic Barred Zone" from entering the U.S. (Congress overrode Wilson's veto in Feb. 1917.)

In 1962, the U.S. space probe Mariner 2 passed Venus at a distance of just over 21,000 miles, transmitting information about the planet, such as its hot surface temperatures and predominantly carbon dioxide atmosphere.

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States*, ruled that Congress was within its authority to enforce the Civil Rights Act of 1964 against racial discrimination by private businesses (in this case, a motel that refused to cater to blacks).

In 1972, Apollo 17 astronauts Harrison Schmitt and Eugene Cernan concluded their third and final moonwalk and blasted off for their rendezvous with the command module.

In 1981, Israel annexed the Golan Heights, which it had seized from Syria in 1967.

In 1985, Wilma Mankiller became the first woman to lead a major American Indian tribe as she took office as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Former New York Yankees outfielder Roger Maris, who'd hit 61 home runs during the 1961 season, died in Houston at age 51.

In 1986, the experimental aircraft Voyager, piloted by Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager, took off from Edwards Air Force Base in California on the first non-stop, non-refueled flight around the world.

In 1988, President Reagan authorized the U-S to enter into a "substantive dialogue" with the Palestine Liberation Organization, after chairman Yasser Arafat said he was renouncing "all forms of terrorism."

In 2005, President [George W. Bush](#) defended his decision to wage the Iraq war, even as he acknowledged that "much of the intelligence turned out to be wrong."

Ten years ago: An Iraqi journalist hurled his shoes at President George W. Bush during a news conference in Baghdad; Bush ducked the flying footwear as they whizzed past his head and landed against the wall behind him. (The shoe-thrower, Muntadhar al-Zeidi (MOON'-tuh-dahr ahl-zay-EE'-dee), ended up spending nine months in prison.)

Five years ago: Bells tolled 26 times in Newtown, Connecticut, to honor the dead on the first anniversary of the Sandy Hook school massacre. China carried out the world's first soft landing of a space probe on the moon in nearly four decades as the unmanned Chang'e 3 lander touched down on the lunar surface. Jameis (cq) Winston won the Heisman Trophy, making the Florida State quarterback the second straight freshman to win the award, after Texas A&M's Johnny Manziel. Actor Peter O'Toole, 81, who'd achieved instant stardom as Lawrence of Arabia and was nominated eight times for an Academy Award without winning, died in London.

One year ago: The Federal Communications Commission voted to repeal the Obama-era "net neutrality" rules, a move that gave internet service providers a free hand to slow or block specific websites and apps as they see fit, or charge more for faster speeds. The most serious charge against James Alex Fields, accused of driving into a crowd protesting a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August, was upgraded to first-degree murder; a 32-year-old woman, Heather Heyer, died and dozens were injured.

Today's Birthdays: Singer-actress Abbe Lane is 87. Actor Hal Williams is 84. Actress-singer Jane Birkin is 72. Pop singer Joyce Vincent-Wilson (Tony Orlando and Dawn) is 72. Entertainment executive Michael Ovitz is 72. Actress Dee Wallace is 70. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ronnie McNeir (The Four Tops) is 69. Rock musician Cliff Williams is 69. Actor-comedian T.K. Carter is 62. Rock singer-musician Mike Scott (The Waterboys) is 60. Singer-musician Peter "Spider" Stacy (The Pogues) is 60. Actress Cynthia Gibb is 55. Actress Nancy Valen is 53. Actor Archie Kao is 49. Actress Natascha McElhone is 49. Actress-comedian Michaela Watkins is 47. Actress-comedian Miranda Hart is 46. Rhythm-and-blues singer Brian Dalrymple (Soul For Real) is 43. Actress KaDee Strickland is 43. Actress Tammy Blanchard is 42. Actress Sophie Monk is 39. Actor-singer-musician Jackson Rathbone is 34. Actress Vanessa Hudgens is 30. Rock/R&B singer Tori Kelly is 26.

Thought for Today: "Both now and for always, I intend to hold fast to my belief in the hidden strength of the human spirit." - Andrei Sakharov (1921-1989).

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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