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Connecting - January 29, 2019

1 message

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Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 9:03 AM

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Connecting

January 29, 2019

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning!

Mary Lahammer is a longtime political reporter for Twin Cities PBS. She followed in her father, **Gene Lahammer's**, footsteps at the Minnesota State Capitol, where he was known as a legendary reporter after 34 years with the Associated Press.

At 85 years old, he agreed to share his life story with his youngest daughter. We lead with that today - and be sure to click on the link at the end for more of her story.

In the midst of the recent sad news on the losses of our colleagues, I thought it would be a good way to start your day. And a reminder to submit your own Monday Profile piece, as **Mark Mittelstadt** did yesterday. Tell your story, in the living years.



And if you have your own story to share about following in the career footsteps of your mother or father, please share.

Have a good day!

Paul

Gene's American Dream



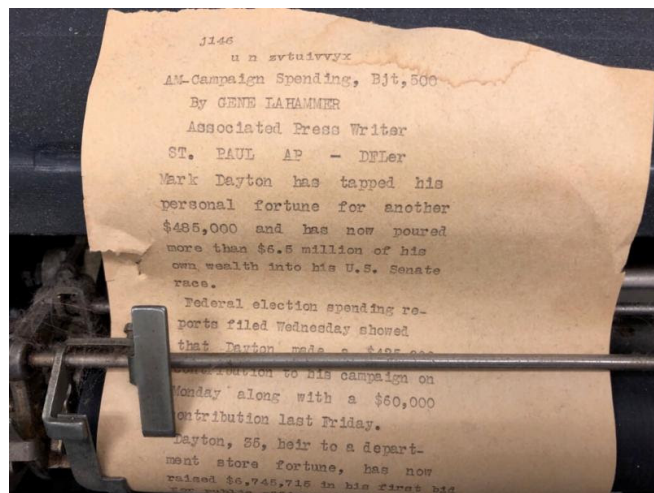
Gene and his daughter Mary

Mary Lahammer (Email) - Gene Lahammer's life is laced with a stream of notable events - but the first one to take his world by storm was the foreclosure of his family farm during the Great Depression. In those lean years he never imagined that he would go on to create what would be called a [dynasty](#).

While Gene didn't like farm work, he often buried his nose in books. He read every book in the school library, including the encyclopedias - and that foundation made him realize that his mind could transport him. The descendant of Norwegian immigrants, his grandmother never spoke a word of English. But one day, he would use his gift with words to change his life and generations to come.

He graduated from high school at 16 years old and college by 18, and went on to teach in a one-room school house. He became an intelligence officer in the Army Security Agency. The GI Bill helped further his education and eventually his career.

"A rainbow walked in this morning in the form of a graduate student," wrote Harl Andersen, head of the AP Sioux Falls bureau. Lahammer would spend more than three decades with the AP, becoming a trusted resource in the Minnesota State Capitol. Upon his retirement in 1994, then Gov. Arne Carlson honored Gene with a retirement party at the Governor's Residence, an act that has yet to be repeated.



Lahammer is also an ardent family man, fiercely proud of his five children who all graduated from college with honors. His passion for his work inspired his youngest child, Mary Lahammer, to follow in his footsteps. In 1998, she became the political reporter for Twin Cities PBS at the Minnesota State Capitol. "He is my hero, professionally and personally," Mary says of her father's admirable work ethic and intelligence. Mary would draw on her father's extensive political experience over the years in [her reports](#).

Looking back at his full life, with its highs and its lows, Lahammer's humble roots are always with him. Despite his hard work and success, he concludes, "I can't believe how lucky I've been."

Click [here](#) for link to Mary's PBS story on her dad.

Remembering Tom Raum

Chris Connell (Email) - A legion of journalists from Washington, Tampa and points in between are sharing memories of Tom and almost every one mentions not only what a tremendous reporter and writer he was, but also what a great colleague and even competitor. Terry Hunt, Tom, Rita Beamish and Merrill Hartson were a Murderers' Row on the White House beat for AP in the first Bush administration and I was along the ride, too. One afternoon in June 1989, a few days after the massacre in Tiananmen Square, Terry was out so Tom got to ask the first question at a sudden presidential news conference. As always, we brainstormed ideas beforehand and the foremost was whether Bush had tried again to speak with Chinese leaders, who'd refused his first call.



Tom Raum in 2007

Bush had deep, personal connections with Beijing and fond memories of carefree days there in the mid-1970s as America's second envoy. In February 1989, a month after his inauguration, he visited China and presented its leaders with black, leather cowboy boots handmade by his favorite bootmaker in Houston, sporting an American flag on the right boot and the flag of China on the left. For their gift, the Chinese rolled out a pair of bicycles like the ones George and Barbara used to pedal around the then-sleepy capital. Bush said he couldn't wait to ride his around Kennebunkport. But the boots - well, the boots weren't a big hit. A nonplused Premier Li Peng said as cameras whirred, "When I go to the United States, maybe I'll wear these boots. It's not the custom in China to have flags on the front."

Well, I suggested to Tom that as a follow-up question, he ask the president if he wanted the patriotic boots back. Tom took my advice and Bush replied, "I have no such plans and I hope he doesn't ask for his bicycles back, either." Well, among the crew glued to televisions at 50 Rock was Lou Boccardi, who immediately let the Washington bureau's managers know he didn't appreciate the impertinent, wasted question at a crisis point in U.S.-Sino relations. Tom, hail fellow that he was, took the criticism with equanimity, absorbed the blame and didn't throw me under the bus. That's the type of colleague he was.

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Carl P. Leubsdorf (Email) - I first met Tom when he was a reporter in the Tallahassee Bureau and I went to Florida for the 1972 Florida Democratic primary won by Alabama Gov. George Wallace. Tom was smart and energetic, and I was hardly surprised when he arrived about two years later in the Washington bureau. While some of us went elsewhere, he stayed and became one of its mainstays, providing smart analysis as well as solid daily reporting. He was also a good guy who deserved a longer life.

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Larry Margasak (Email) - Even though Tom and I had similar longevity in the Washington bureau, I always would read his stories because he had such a nifty way of explaining complicated subjects. And boy, was he fast. Tom was the congressional correspondent when I started covering Congress in 1983, and, despite my 18 years of AP experience at that point, I am forever grateful to him for taking time to teach me how things work at the Capitol. Tom also was a great White House reporter but I especially admired his coverage of economics, not exactly an easy beat. I had the good fortune of seeing Tom every month at a gathering of retired bureau staffers and loved his AP stories. I'm glad I saw him just a few weeks before his unfortunate passing.

Connecting mailbox

The Trumpian Dictionary: Words We Almost Never Saw Before - About Editing and Writing

Mike Feinsilber (Email) - Maybe it's coincidental. I'm not blaming Trumpy for this phenomenon and-heavens forbid-not giving him credit. But ever since January 20, 2017, I've noticed in the papers that I read-the New York Times and the Washington Post-the frequent appearances of some words I rarely had read before. Here's my collection. You're invited to add to it in the comment box.

Dog whistle

The Merriam-Webster dictionary: "a subtly aimed political message which is intended for, and can only be understood by, a particular group."

From the Times, referring to the Trump-Russia connection: "But what seemed inexplicable when Mr. Trump first expressed his admiration for the Russian leader

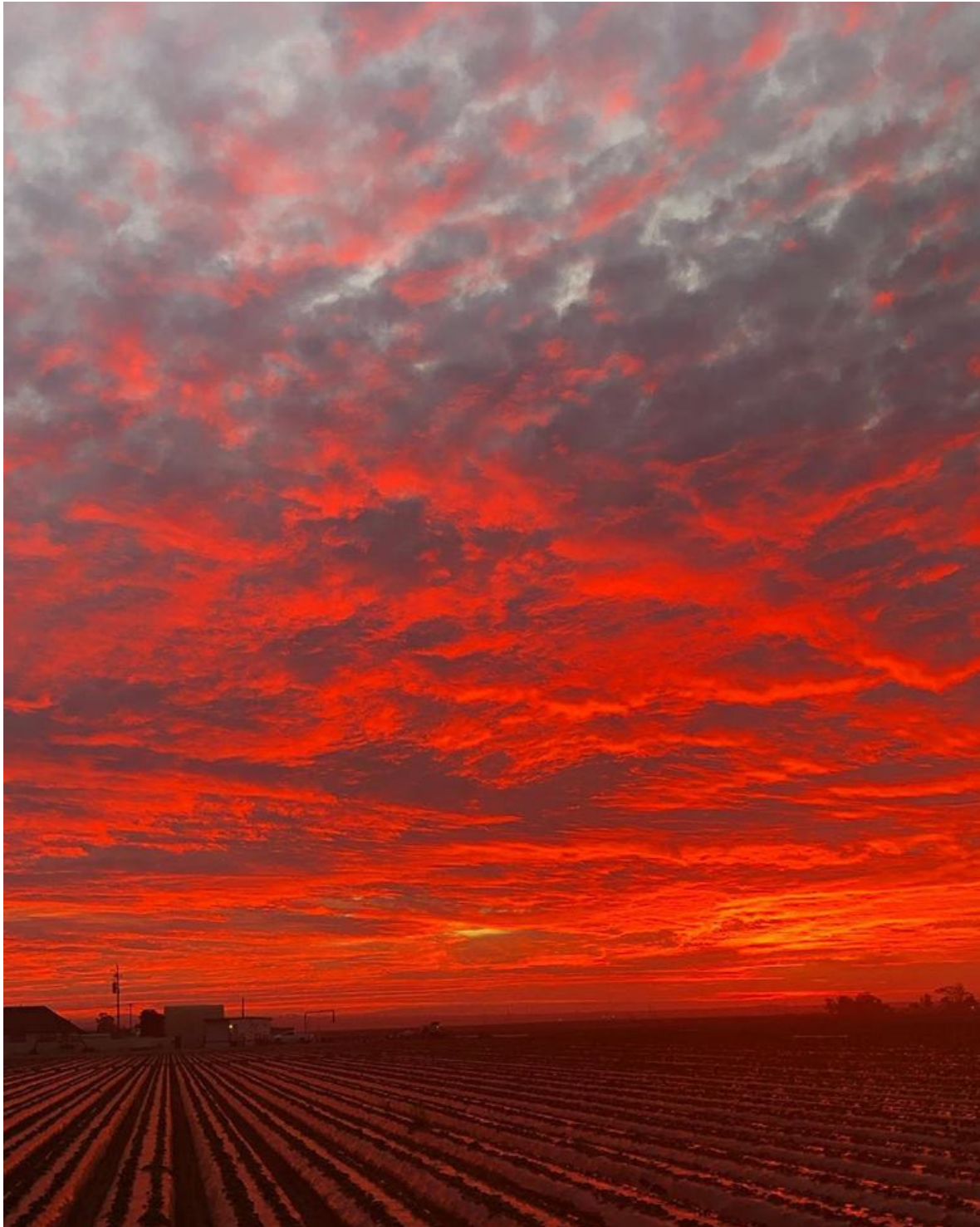
seems, in retrospect, to have been a shrewd dog whistle to a small but highly motivated part of his base."

From a Post article on what opponents mean when they say Trumpy's concept of a border wall is "medieval:" Both Trump and Democratic leaders are misconstruing history, and that is the point. The medieval ideas invoked by both sides reveal much more about their current values than they do about medieval history itself. Understanding that this is a dog whistle is crucially important.

Read more [here](#).

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Connecting sky shot - Salinas, California



Kristin Gazlay ([Email](#)) - Here's a shot of a farm field in Salinas, California, where my parents moved 40 years ago.

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A job interview that went nowhere

Paul Albright (Email) - Connecting's recent posts concerning interviews that went nowhere reminded me of when I was between jobs and bumming around Europe in 1961 until the bankroll was gone.

I dropped by the *Stars and Stripes* editorial office in Darmstadt, Germany, to see if anything was available. The editor I spoke with was interested but that he had to clear a new hire with headquarters in Washington, DC. Since approval was expected to take a week or more, I headed south.

While roaming around Rome I was offered a job at an English-language celebrity tabloid that catered to American and English tourists. I passed on the offer, hoping the *Stars and Stripes* job would happen. It didn't. Either the *Stars and Stripes* editor was just messing with me, or he didn't have any clout with headquarters.

With money running out, I headed back to the U.S. where my next paycheck was from the AP.

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A phone call to Detroit bureau - and the start of a 31-year AP career

Jim Reindl (Email) - Reading Bill Kaczor's account of joining the AP via failed job interviews reminded me of my own AP start. I graduated from the Kiplinger Program at Ohio State in 1982, another newspaper recession year (are there any that aren't?). Some Gannett papers flew me around for interviews, including one of the Rochester, NY papers, which had not quite yet been supplanted as Gannett's flagships by the newly launched USA Today. I didn't mesh with any of them, nor they with me (in Rochester I was assigned to write about Paula the Polar Bear at the zoo and I knew that was the end of that tryout).

I took my master's degree and bruised graduate school ego and repaired to my parents' basement to contemplate the fact I was jobless and getting married in about eight months. A friend of mine was working for a pioneering but now dying auto industry marketing company in Detroit and got me a job cleaning out one of their film warehouses. To release my frustrations, I would take those old round metal film containers and sail them across the dusty expanse of warehouse while doing my version of primal scream therapy.

One day it occurred to me that I knew one had to take a test to join the AP. I'd always considered myself a newspaperman, having started at the Muskegon Chronicle out of Central Michigan University with plans to take the Detroit Free

Press by storm some day. Desperate times, etc. so I called the Detroit bureau and gave my credentials to someone over the phone before asking if I could take the test. They agreed.

I showed up at the bureau with my AP Stylebook under my arm and when no one stopped me from using it, I consulted it liberally during the test. A week or so later I got a letter from Bureau Chief Chuck Green informing me I did well on the test but did miss more than an acceptable number of spelling words (I can spell dictionary, though). He invited me in for an interview and that launched my 31-year career with the best news organization I never wanted to join.

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'The Promise' - and why it's his favorite journalism movie



Christian Bale as an AP reporter in The Promise

Bill Kaczor (Email) - "All the President's Men," "Spotlight," "Citizen Kane," and "The Post" certainly are my favorite journalism films in that order (a no-brainer, really), but let me put in a plug for No. 5 on my list: "The Promise." I put it just a notch ahead of "A Private War."

"The Promise," released in 2017, is a love story set in the early days of World War I in Constantinople amid the mass killings and deportations of Armenians carried out by the Ottoman Empire. It stars Christian Bale as an AP reporter, looking more like his real self rather than his more recent heavily made-up portrayals Winston Churchill and Dick Cheney. Jack Coyle's AP story about the film, which you can read [here](#), says "Bale's portrayal in the movie is almost certainly the most starry, most heroic and most hard-drinking big-screen depiction of the AP in its 171-year history." Coyle noted that the character is a composite but that most of the dispatches sent from the region during that time period came from J. Damon Theron.

"The Promise" was a box office bomb and got mixed reviews from critics. But I loved it, if nothing else but for the fact that it helped erase some of that "Anonymous Press" image that AP staffers have had for much of its history. I also wished I looked more like this Christian Bale instead of the Churchill and Cheney versions.

According to articles in Forbes and Wired, the film's poor showing likely was at least partly the result of the century-old and ongoing political debate about whether the Armenians were victims of genocide or something less sinister. It was an independent film financed by Armenian-American businessman Kekor Kerkorian and advances the Armenian viewpoint that what happened indeed was a genocide. Even before the film was released, Armenian Genocide deniers, though, had launched a campaign to sabotage the film through such tactics as submitting bad reviews to social media websites. The Turkish government continues to deny that its predecessors committed genocide and has pressured a succession of U.S. presidents to avoid recognizing it as such. People in Turkey even can be prosecuted for talking about it. The Turks say the killings were isolated and not part of an organized campaign.

Bale's character, as well as the real-life AP correspondents, heroically reported the killings and deportations despite Ottoman efforts to suppress the news. The controversy and the film even may have some present-day relevance given President Trump's tweeted plan to pull U.S. troops out of Syria and potentially leave America's Kurdish allies there to the tender mercies of Turkish President Erdogan, who had encouraged Trump's decision.

And while we are doing this, my nominee for the worst journalism film is "The Front Runner." It also, thank goodness, was a box office flop. It depicts Miami Herald editors and reporters as bad guys for disclosing would-be president Gary Hart's alleged extramarital affair (he also denied he had sex with that woman). In particular, Herald reporter Tom Fielder (later Dean of Boston University's College of Communications) as a fat, slovenly, bearded, near-do-well. I know Tom Fielder, and he wasn't that guy in the movie. He is clean shaven, handsome, athletic, a great journalist and a good guy if there ever was one.

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Tracking former President Nixon for a comment

Mike Harris ([Email](#)) - Reading the recent obituary of Russell Baker of The New York Times, this portion of the story stuck with me and prompts my remembrance involving Richard Nixon:

And he was as devilish in person as in print. A fellow Times columnist, Tom Wicker, recalled that Mr. Baker, talking once to college students, was asked, "What courses should a journalism school teach?" He replied: "The ideal journalism school needs only one course. Students should be required to stand outside a closed door for six hours. Then the door would open, someone would put his head around the jamb and say, 'No comment.' The door would close again, and the students would be required to write 800 words against a deadline."

I spent a few days at 50 Rock in October of 1985, helping out during a brief lull in the racing season. I went into the office one morning in time for the start of my 10 a.m. shift and was told to keep my coat on. Former president Richard M. Nixon, a baseball fan, had been chosen to arbitrate a dispute between major league owners and the umpires over how much extra money the umpires would get for working expanded league playoffs that year. And he had made his decision.

I was sent to the downtown building where Nixon had an office to find out the decision and get a comment or two from the man. All I had was the address of the building.

The first problem I had was that nobody in the building knew - or would say - which office Nixon was in. His name was nowhere to be found on the information boards in the lobby and none of the offices even had numbers on them - just long names of law firms.

I called the AP office and asked if the release about the announcement had an office number or the name of the law firm? Negative!

I looked around for other media people, hoping that someone else might be there for the same reason and know where to go. Nothing!

Finally, in desperation, I found a security guard in the lobby and told him my sad story, asking if he had any idea where Mr. Nixon worked these days. In a very

conspiratorial tone, the man said, "Try the office at the end of the hall on the 14th floor."

My nerves tingling, I took the elevator up to 14, walked to the end of the hall and found a heavy metal door with no writing on it. I knocked - several times. Finally, a small inset door opened and a female voice asked in a not-friendly tone, "What do you want?"

"I'm Mike Harris of the Associated Press. I'm here to get Mr. Nixon's decision in the umpire's arbitration."

The little door slammed shut with no comment from within and I stood there wondering what, if anything, would happen next. I was just about to try knocking again when the little door opened again and a sheet of paper was pushed through, again with no comment. I grabbed it and scanned it quickly. It was Mr. Nixon's decision summed up in one paragraph.

The little door slammed shut as I read.

I stood there for a moment, steeled myself and knocked again. Again, it was moments until that little door opened.

"What do you want?" the disembodied voice asked. "I'd like to ask Mr. Nixon a couple of questions," I replied. "Wait!" the voice said.

Again there was a wait, several minutes, which seemed much longer.

Finally, the little door opened again. "Mr. Nixon has no comment other than his written statement." Slam!

I realized that was all I was going to get and went to the lobby to find a pay phone to call in a quick story.

When I got back to the office, I sat down to do a rewrite with more detail about the dispute. Day supervisor Fred Lief looked over and asked, "So, how was Mr. Nixon?"

"I'm not sure he was even there," I replied.

Stories of interest

As 2020 Looms, the News Media Looks Forward, and Back (New York Times)

By Michael M. Grynbaum

As Americans brace for the next presidential campaign - already underway and showing on a screen near you - press pundits are worried about the news media's readiness for the challenge ahead.

Will reporters follow the same assumptions that made the outcome in 2016 such a shock? Can pollsters reassure a public that has soured on the power of political forecasting?

To answer those questions, I turned to a cohort accustomed to diagnosing human foibles: scholars who have expertise in psychology. After all, journalists are basically a bunch of neurotics. And with the 2020 race looming, maybe we could all use some time on the couch.

"All of us who thought it was inevitable that Trump would lose ignored warning signs that we were wrong," said Susan Fiske, a professor of social psychology at Princeton.

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

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The Crisis Facing American Journalism Did Not Start With the Internet (Slate)

By JEREMY LITTAU

A recent study by researchers at the University of North Carolina sounded the alarm about a growing problem for American democracy: the number of cities in the U.S. that could be classified as "news deserts" without local news to hold powerful people accountable. We have lost about 20 percent of local newspapers in the United States since 2004, and at least 900 communities now are without any local news source in that same time frame.

The problem is in full focus this week after news of layoffs at three major media companies. While a lot of the attention is focused on national players HuffPost and BuzzFeed, the cuts at Gannett are the most worrisome, because it is one of the last big newspaper chains that has properties in markets of all size.

That the Gannett news is not a red-alert story in the U.S. reflects a misunderstanding of the major problems facing American newspaper companies, an economic story that goes back further than the advent of the public internet in the 1990s. But it's a story Americans need to know and understand better, because the news crisis you keep hearing about is a local problem. If you think there's corruption in D.C., what's happening at City Hall is often worse-and in more and more places, there's no longer anyone paid to root it out.

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

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Schurz Communications selling its newspapers, including eight in Indiana (Indianapolis Business Journal)

Media company Schurz Communications Inc. announced an agreement Monday to sell all 20 of its newspapers, including eight papers in Indiana.

Mishawaka, Indiana-based Schurz said it planned to sell its publishing division to Pittsford, New York-based GateHouse Media Inc. Financial terms of the deal, which is expected to close in the first quarter, were not disclosed.

The sale includes The Reporter Times in Martinsville, The Mooresville-Decatur Times in Mooresville, the Herald Times in Bloomington and the South Bend Tribune.

The Times-Mail in Bedford, the Notre Dame Insider in South Bend, The Evening World in Spencer and the Hoosier Topics also are part of the sale.

The other publications involved in the deal are in Michigan, Maryland, Pennsylvania and South Dakota.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Andy Lippman.

The Final Word

Twitter is the crystal meth of newsrooms

By David Von Drehle

The Washington Post

I saw the future of political reporting half a dozen years ago, and I've been hoping to unsee it ever since.

In the final week of August 2012, after Tropical Storm Isaac delivered a scouring rain to Florida's Gulf Coast, an army of scribes and pundits wilted in the humid aftermath at the gates of the Republican National Convention in Tampa. A presidential nominating convention is not the best place to find political insights, but it's not the worst, either. One can learn something about up-and-comers by sampling the speeches that drone on all afternoon and evening. Nuggets can be mined from interviews with delegates. Most of all, a reporter can perhaps glimpse the nominee's inner self - not in what they show so much as how they choose to show it. (For instance, after noticing that Donald Trump was staging his 2016 convention as a mash-up of reality TV and professional wrestling, a reporter could be braced for the hyperbolic and improvisational melodrama of Trump's presidency.)

But in the coolness of the press section of what was then known as the Tampa Bay Times Forum, I observed something I'd never seen in seven prior conventions. The seats were filled, but hardly anyone glanced at the stage or the delegates. My colleagues had their laptops opened to their TweetDecks. Side by side in the dim glow of their screens, they monitored each bon mot and and burp of Twitter's commentary on events.burp

Now, obviously: old fogey alert. Apply your geezer filter as you see fit. In that moment, I had a bad feeling about Twitter, and little has happened in the ensuing years to make me feel any better. Twitter is the crystal meth of newsrooms - a drug that insinuates itself into our vulnerabilities only to leave us toothless and disgraced.

What are these vulnerabilities? For one, many journalists are surprisingly shy. We chose a trade that involves watching and witnessing rather than risking and daring. For many of us, the most difficult part of the job is ringing the doorbell of a bereaved family, or prying into the opinions of unwelcoming strangers. Twitter has created a seductive universe in which the reactions of a virtual community are served up in neatly quotable bits without need for uncomfortable personal interactions.

For another, many journalists are these days under intense pressure to produce quick "takes" on the news to drive website traffic. Twitter offers the amphetamine hit that makes such pressure survivable. No reporter can go to the scene of a dozen events per day, observe what happens, interview those affected, sort the meaning from the dross and file a story. But Twitter offers an endless stream of faux events: fleeting sensations, momentary outrages, ersatz insights and provocative distortions. "News" nuggets roll by like the chocolates on Lucy's conveyor belt.

A third vulnerability is our smart-aleck gene. I'm not sure why journalism exerts such a pull on kids with the sharpest wisecracks, but if you spend five minutes in a stadium press box or aboard a campaign bus, you'll see those kids grown up. On Twitter, a perfect cynical comment or comeback can be savored and shared by thousands. Pre-Twitter, the same gem might have found only a paltry few listeners to enjoy it.

So it is no surprise that Twitter addiction is rampant among journalists. But the root of any addiction lies in the gap between the drug's world and the real world. My colleagues in Tampa were like experimental teens, enjoying the buzz of Twitter's reaction to the convention instead of witnessing the actual convention itself. Harmless enough, perhaps, when the real-world event is Ann Romney's tribute to her husband, Mitt.

But there's a direct line from the TweetDecks of 2012 to the widespread failure of political journalism to understand the Trump campaign four years later. Too many of us covered Twitter's reaction to Trump, instead of covering the ideas and impulses of the voters he was reaching. Whether by instinct or intention, Trump stoked the addiction by fueling Twitter with red meat and steroids.

Now the problem is full-blown. Respected journalists can spend a week debating the expression on a 16-year-old boy's face in a video snippet of uncertain provenance and unknown context.

They can assert that "the world" was rattled by a minor confrontation at the Lincoln Memorial, proving only how deeply they've confused the bot-infested echo chamber of Twitter with the world at large. That's addiction talking.

They can pore over hours of cellphone video, as though enough video might somehow put them at the scene.

I frequently hear that Twitter must clean up its platform. I'm reminded of our endless wars against drug cartels. Let Americans stop using and - voilà! - problem solved. Twitter will evaporate without journalists to feed it content, without journalists to promote its existence, without journalists to hook new audiences. So, my fellow journalists: Just say no.

Click [here](#) for a link to the story. Shared by Mike Feinsilber, Scott Charton, Mark Mittelstadt.

Today in History - January 29, 2019



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Jan. 29, the 29th day of 2019. There are 336 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 29, 1936, the first inductees of baseball's Hall of Fame, including Ty Cobb and Babe Ruth, were named in Cooperstown, New York.

On this date:

In 1820, King George III died at Windsor Castle at age 81; he was succeeded by his son, who became King George IV.

In 1845, Edgar Allan Poe's famous narrative poem "The Raven" ("Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary...") was first published in the New York Evening Mirror.

In 1856, Britain's Queen Victoria introduced the Victoria Cross to reward military acts of valor during the Crimean War.

In 1861, Kansas became the 34th state of the Union.

In 1863, the Bear River Massacre took place as the U.S. Army attacked Shoshone in present-day Idaho. The New York Stock & Exchange Board changed its name to the New York Stock Exchange.

In 1919, the ratification of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, which launched Prohibition, was certified by Acting Secretary of State Frank L. Polk.

In 1963, the first charter members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame were named in Canton, Ohio (they were enshrined when the Hall opened in September 1963). Poet Robert Frost died in Boston at age 88.

In 1975, a bomb exploded inside the U.S. State Department in Washington, causing considerable damage, but injuring no one; the radical group Weather Underground claimed responsibility.

In 1979, President Jimmy Carter formally welcomed Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping to the White House, following the establishment of diplomatic relations.

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan announced in a nationally broadcast message that he and Vice President George H.W. Bush would seek re-election in the fall.

In 1998, a bomb rocked an abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, killing security guard Robert Sanderson and critically injuring nurse Emily Lyons. (The bomber, Eric Rudolph, was captured in May 2003 and is serving a life sentence.)

In 2002, In his first State of the Union address, President George W. Bush said terrorists were still threatening America - and he warned of "an axis of evil" consisting of North Korea, Iran and Iraq.

Ten years ago: Declaring that ending pay disparity is not just a women's issue, President Barack Obama signed The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, giving workers more time to take their pay discrimination cases to court. The Illinois Senate voted, 59-0, to convict Gov. Rod Blagojevich (blah-GOY'-uh-vich) of abuse of power and throw him out of office nearly two months after the second-term Democrat's arrest on charges of trying to sell Barack Obama's vacant Senate seat.

Five years ago: The state of Missouri executed Herbert Smulls for the 1991 slaying of jeweler Stephen Honickman in suburban St. Louis.

One year ago: FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, a target of frequent criticism and accusations of bias from President Donald Trump, abruptly stepped down from his position ahead of his planned retirement in the spring. Alex Azar, a former drug company executive and official in George W. Bush's administration, was sworn in as Trump's second health secretary. The Cleveland Indians announced that they would remove the Chief Wahoo logo from their uniforms in the coming baseball season, after decades of protests and complaints that the grinning, red-faced caricature was racist.

Today's Birthdays: Writer-composer-lyricist Leslie Bricusse is 88. Feminist author Germaine Greer is 80. Actress Katharine Ross is 79. Feminist author Robin Morgan is 78. Actor Tom Selleck is 74. Rhythm-and-blues singer Bettye LaVette is 73. Actor Marc Singer is 71. Actress Ann Jillian is 69. Rock musician Louie Perez (Los Lobos) is 66. Rhythm-and-blues/funk singer Charlie Wilson is 66. Talk show host Oprah Winfrey is 65. Actor Terry Kinney is 65. Country singer Irlene Mandrell is 63. Actress Diane Delano is 62. Actress Judy Norton (TV: "The Waltons") is 61. Rock musician Johnny Spampinato is 60. Olympic gold-medal diver Greg Louganis is 59. Rock musician David Baynton-Power (James) is 58. Rock musician Eddie Jackson (Queensryche) is 58. Actor Nicholas Turturro is 57. Rock singer-musician Roddy Frame (Aztec Camera) is 55. Actor-director Edward Burns is 51. Actor Sam Trammell is 50. Actress Heather Graham is 49. Former House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., is 49. Actor Sharif Atkins is 44. Actress Sara Gilbert is 44. Actress Kelly Packard is 44. Actor Justin Hartley is 42. Actor Sam Jaeger is 42. Writer and TV personality Jedediah Bila is 40. Actor Andrew Keegan is 40. Actor Jason James Richter is 39. Blues musician Jonny Lang is 38. Pop-rock singer Adam Lambert (TV: "American Idol") is 37. Country singer Eric Paslay is 36.

Thought for Today: "Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired." - Robert Frost, American poet (born 1874, died this date in 1963).

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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