



Paul Shane <pjshane@gmail.com>

Connecting - November 22, 2019

1 message

Paul Stevens <paulstevens46@gmail.com>

Fri, Nov 22, 2019 at 9:04 AM

Reply-To: paulstevens46@gmail.com

To: pjshane@gmail.com

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Connecting

November 22, 2019

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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning on this the 22nd day of November 2019,**What's the lead, Walter?**

That's the question fellow "Boys on the Bus" would ask the AP's **Walter Mears** during the 1972 presidential campaign between Richard Nixon and George McGovern as they looked for the news peg - the lead - of an event they had just covered. (Walter won the 1977 Pulitzer for his coverage of the 1976 presidential campaign.)

Mears covered the impeachment hearings of Nixon and of Bill Clinton - so I thought it only natural to ask our Connecting colleague for his take on the current congressional impeachment hearings of President Donald Trump and any comparisons he might draw.

His 2003 book, [Deadlines Past: Forty Years Of Presidential Campaigning: A Reporter's Story](#), remains a great read by one of the finest political reporters in the history of American journalism.

From his home in North Carolina, where the former AP executive editor and Washington bureau chief moved after leaving Washington, he offers some thoughts that lead today's issue.

Today is one of the most significant dates in U.S. history. It is the 56th anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas. Your personal memories of that tragic day would be appreciated; send them along for use Monday.

Have a great weekend!

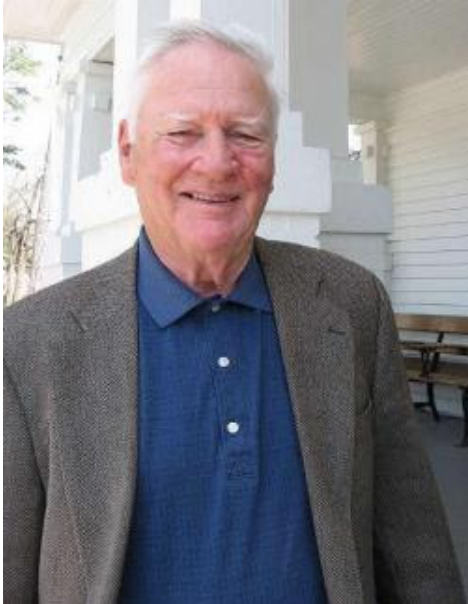
Paul

By comparison to Nixon and Clinton impeachment hearings, current House hearings on Trump tend toward bureaucratic, mundane

Walter Mears ([Email](#)) - With the presidency at issue, impeachment hearings would seem to be arenas for high drama and disclosures. In the hands of a novelist, perhaps. But with rare exceptions, not in the real world of politics.

In the case of Richard Nixon, only president ever to resign, the actual House impeachment hearings were brief and almost entirely in closed sessions of the

Judiciary Committee which finally adopted three articles of impeachment in July 1974.



Walter Mears

The memorable, televised hearings were in the Senate Watergate committee, which set the stage for impeachment, but the power to enforce it belonged to the House.

All told, the formal Nixon impeachment hearings lasted less than a week, off camera until the end. Compare that with the 319 hours of televised hearings conducted by the Watergate committee. That is where the Watergate drama played out, not in House impeachment hearings like those now being conducted in the case of Donald Trump.

The Watergate committee had an unforgettable cast - the chairman, Sen. Sam Ervin, of North Carolina who styled himself as a simple country lawyer. Hardly, as he became a national figure, instrumental in the undoing of a president, and the ranking Republican, Sen. Howard Baker, whose persistent question was what did the president know and when did he know it.

After 45 years, the Watergate hearings stand in national memory as the Nixon impeachment hearings, no matter the parliamentary distinction. The Senate's televised hearings were the ones that registered and counted.

By comparison, the current House hearings on Trump tend toward the bureaucratic and mundane. It is a political argument, focused on who said what.

The central question is whether Trump demanded an investigation of former vice president Joe Biden's son and his business dealings in Ukraine as the price for releasing military aid to that nation. In the overworked and overused phrase, a quid pro quo, essentially using public funds for political purposes against a potential rival. The aid was delayed but released.

The Democrats argue that he did and that it was an impeachable offense. The Republicans say so what. With no referee they just shout at each other.

In the impeachments of Nixon and Bill Clinton, investigations came first, hearings later. Essentially, the cases were written before the House hearings.

On Nixon, special counsel Archibald Cox and his team investigated, and Nixon's efforts to block them - and fire Cox - were central to the obstruction of justice charge, one of three brought against him. When the Supreme Court ordered the tapes released, on July 24, 1974, the verdict against Nixon was inevitable. One of the tapes was the so-called smoking gun, recording Nixon's effort to use CIA secrecy in the coverup effort. When that was disclosed Nixon's Republican support against conviction in the Senate frayed and then collapsed. Republican leaders told him he couldn't win and he soon resigned.

That final chapter actually began in the Watergate hearings, with the surprise testimony of a White House staff aide who told the committee that Nixon's had his meetings and telephone calls taped, which proved to be the inescapable evidence against him.

For political trivia fans, that long forgotten witness was a man named Alexander Butterfield.

Once the White House tapes were known, Nixon's presidency was undone. Long afterward, I asked Nixon what he wished he had done differently. I should have burned the tapes, he told me.

In the Bill Clinton impeachment, prosecutor Kenneth Starr laid out the case on lying under oath and attempted obstruction of justice, and the blunt conclusions of his report eclipsed the perfunctory hearings that followed.

Clinton was impeached by the House, acquitted by the Senate, and completed his presidency, winning a second term despite the Monica Lewinsky affair and the impeachment.

Now Trump. In this case, the impeachment hearings are proceeding without an independent investigation. The hearings have devolved into a political argument, more bureaucratic than dramatic. No smoking guns here, only the drone of witnesses delivering differing versions of the same events. So far at least, nothing stirring or dramatic.

AP's top editor: Facts 'foundational' in 2020 election



By Patrick Maks

Speaking to media executives and journalists at the News Xchange conference in Paris on Wednesday, AP Executive Editor Sally Buzbee underscored the importance of factual reporting in covering the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

Buzbee said the reporting of facts - and the American public's ability to discern fact from fiction - will play a pivotal role in the outcome of the U.S. presidential race.

"It seems like such an easy, simple thing and yet it is actually almost elementary and completely foundational to this campaign: what really are facts and how do people determine what to trust as they make their voting decisions," Buzbee said.

To illustrate that dynamic, Buzbee pointed to a recent poll by the AP-NORC Center for Public Opinion Research and USAFacts, published Wednesday, that found Americans are broadly skeptical that facts underlie some of the basic functions of democracy in the U.S.

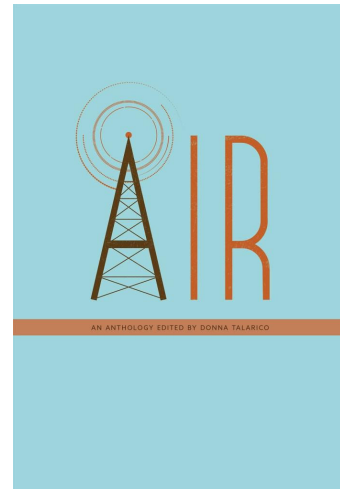
Read more [here](#).

More book offerings from Connecting colleagues

Air

Brian Bland ([Email](#)) - Here's a reminder about "Air, a radio anthology," mentioned in Connecting when it was published last spring. Its whimsical two-dozen mini-memoirs are about working in small-market radio back in the day. Among the contributors: retired AP Radio correspondent Brian Bland. A fun read and good stocking stuffer.

"Air" is available from the publisher, Hippocampus Magazine via its [Web site](#), at 12 bucks, plus postage. It's also available on Amazon by clicking [here](#).

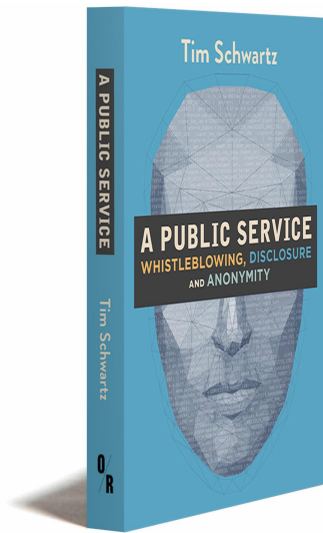


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A Public Service: Whistleblowing, Disclosure and Anonymity

Tim Harper ([Email](#)) doctored this book from scratch: digital privacy expert Tim Schwartz' well-timed and welcome "A Public Service: Whistleblowing, Disclosure and Anonymity," a detailed, sophisticated how-to guide for whistleblowers to remain out of sight, and for any journalists working with whistleblowers. It's not on Amazon and won't be for a while because, well, Amazon. To order, click [here](#).

Another editorial-consulting client, a mutual friend, introduced me to Tim Shwartz who, like many of the people I work with, is brilliant but doesn't have the foggiest about how to put a book together or get it published. Like always, we talked about the book, and what he wanted it to do, and I helped him lay out a work plan and a tentative structure. That changed, as it always does, when he got into the work, but we had a lot of very productive back and forth. I wrote a few sections that I was competent to write, and reviewed and edited -- and sometimes rewrote -- the sections he wrote. My biggest role as a doctor, as usual, was in organizing both the workflow and the structure. I was going to help him find an agent early in the process, which I often do, but after learning more about the book I took him straight



to a publisher I thought might be interested. Two days later they made a deal. Then we had to write the doggone book. Once he got rolling, there was some copy editing and proofing and a little re-organizing, but by then he could see what was doing, where he was going, and how to get there. It's different every time out. Sometimes authors need only a light edit, and sometimes I am a full-fledged ghost or collaborator. This one was particularly satisfying because the topic is important to me and Tim, now a friend, was so good to work with.

Connecting mailbox

Kathy Curran's Watergate dress story an entertaining read

Kevin Noblet ([Email](#)) - To this English lit major, Kathy Curran's account of stitching a dress together while watching the Watergate hearings reminded me of Madame Defarge's quiet and dreadful knitting during the French Revolution in Dickens' Tale of Two Cities. An entertaining story.

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Connecting sunrise - Vancouver, Washington



Doug Pizac ([Email](#)) - This is Thursday morning's sunrise over the wetlands and Salmon Creek from our rear deck in the northwest area of Vancouver, WA. Nearly every day is another wonderment.

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AP names Byrne news director for southern South America

MEXICO CITY (AP) - Paul Byrne, a seasoned video journalist who has led all-format reporting on clergy sex abuse and economic tumult in Argentina, the unrest in Chile and Bolivia and other major stories, has been named by The Associated Press as its news director for South America's Southern Cone region.

Based in Buenos Aires, Byrne will lead coverage in text, photos and video for Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bolivia, a diverse territory where economic potential collides with deep-rooted poverty, defining the challenges and opportunities facing Latin America.

The announcement was made Thursday by Matt Chandler, AP's news director for Latin America and the Caribbean.



"Paul is a natural leader and one who knows what it takes to win on breaking news stories vital for AP clients across all formats," Chandler said.

Byrne, 41, has been the senior video producer in the Southern Cone since 2014 and covered stories throughout Latin America, including World Cup soccer and the Olympics in Brazil, U.S. presidential trips and papal visits. In 2018, he took on the role of interim news director for the area.

Read more [here](#).

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Hinrich Award for Reporting on Trade Goes to AP Team

By Sandy K. Johnson

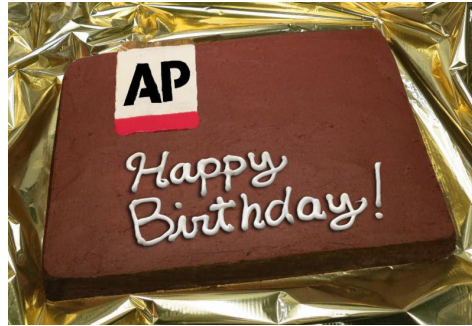
Paul Wiseman, Joe McDonald, Anne D'Innocenzio of The Associated Press have won the National Press Foundation's inaugural Hinrich Foundation Award for Distinguished Reporting on Trade.

The reporters will receive the award at NPF's annual journalism awards dinner on Thursday, Feb. 13. More details on the dinner, and other award winners, can be seen [here](#).

NPF judges said: "The AP series offers a big-picture historical look at America's trade history and the factors driving the trade disputes. The reporters cut through the political rhetoric and dug beneath the headlines to effectively explain the realities of trade on a granular level. The writing is colorful, lively and admirably clear."

Read more [here](#).

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

Ron Johnson - ronjohnson77@gmail.com

Tod Megredy - tmegredy@gmail.com

John Strauss - johncstrauss@gmail.com

On Saturday to...

Sally Stapleton - sallystapleton@gmail.com

John Willis - jmwillis32@aol.com

On Sunday to...

Harold Waters - htandjoew12@gmail.com

Stories of interest

Shepard Smith, Late of Fox News, Gives \$500,000 to a Free Press Group (New York Times)

By Michael M. Grynbaum

In his first public remarks since abruptly resigning from Fox News last month, the anchor Shepard Smith called on Thursday for a steadfast defense of independent journalism, while offering a few subtle barbs at President Trump's treatment of the press.

And in a surprise announcement, Mr. Smith said he would personally donate \$500,000 to the Committee to Protect Journalists, a nonprofit group that advances press freedoms around the world.

"Intimidation and vilification of the press is now a global phenomenon. We don't have to look far for evidence of that," Mr. Smith said at the group's annual dinner in Midtown Manhattan, an appearance he signed up for before he left Fox News, his television home of 23 years.

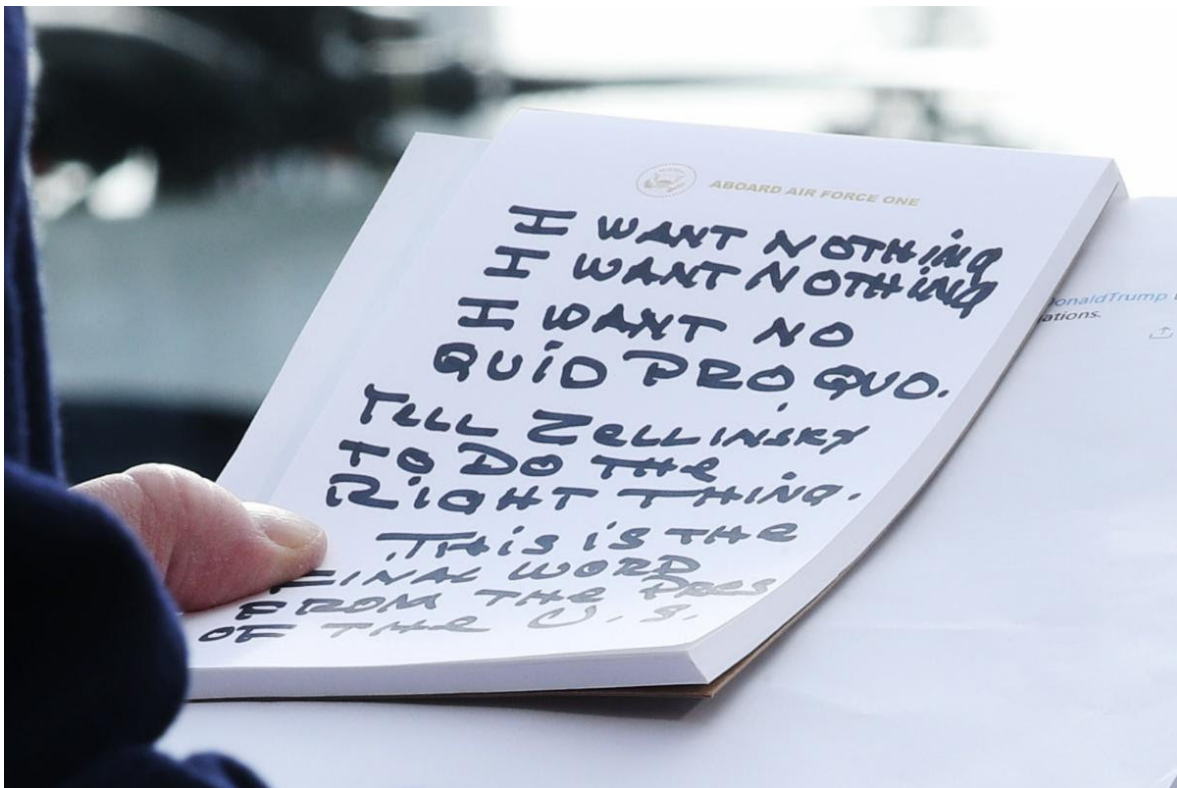
The crowd at the black-tie fund-raiser - which draws leading reporters, editors and executives from across the media industry - rose to its feet and applauded after Mr. Smith revealed his donation.

The dinner, formally known as the International Press Freedom Awards, recognized journalists who had persevered through hardship and government oppression in Brazil, India, Nicaragua and Tanzania. Mr. Smith served as M.C., and while he did not mention Mr. Trump by name, his remarks brought knowing nods from the crowd at the Grand Hyatt hotel ballroom.

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

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How the Photographer Got That Iconic Shot of Trump's Notes (Wired)



PHOTOGRAPH: MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES

By **BRIAN BARRETT**

It's a simple photograph, just a close-up on a notepad filled with Sharpie letters scrawled in an all-caps shout. But the pad is Donald Trump's, the notes are a strangled refutation of fact, and the image has instantly become the most iconic yet of the impeachment proceedings that have enveloped his presidency. In an email, Getty Images photographer Mark Wilson shared with WIRED how he got the shot.

Wilson has been with Getty for 20 years; in that time he's covered presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and now Trump. More recently, he's been on the scene at the trial of Trump associate Roger Stone, as well as the Capitol Hill impeachment testimony of Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman and foreign service officer Jennifer Williams. On Tuesday, though, Wilson was stationed at the White House South Lawn, where Trump gave brief remarks before departing on Marine One.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Dennis Conrad, Mike Holmes.

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ACLU Sues Trump Administration For Detaining Journalists At Border (Huffington Post)

By LYDIA O'CONNOR

The American Civil Liberties Union announced Wednesday that it is suing President Donald Trump's administration for tracking, detaining and interrogating journalists while they were reporting on U.S.-Mexico border conditions.

The ACLU lawsuit is being filed on behalf of five photojournalists who traveled to Mexico late last year and early this year to document the stories of those traveling in a so-called caravan toward the border - a group of asylum-seekers Trump has bashed as a "big con" and has compared to murderers.

"When the government tries to circumvent constitutional protections, we must hold it accountable," an ACLU statement said. "No journalist should have to fear government interference for having the persistence, courage, and commitment to expose the truth."

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

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Senator vows fight against shareholder known for downsizing newspapers

By Leonard Greene

New York Daily News

A hedge fund that acquired a stake in the parent company of the Daily News has drawn the wrath of Sen. Chuck Schumer, who said the acquisition could threaten the newspaper.

After Alden Global Capital bought a 25.2% stake in Tribune Publishing, which owns The News, Schumer promised to lead the fight against Alden, which he described as "the destroyer of newspapers."

"Any plans to reduce the size, scope or impact of the New York Daily News, as Alden has done in the past to other prominent newspapers, will be met with fierce resistance," Schumer said in a statement.

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

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Sports Illustrated Print Edition to Go Monthly in 2020 (The Wrap)

By Lindsey Ellefson

First, the weekly print edition of Sports Illustrated was cut, bringing distribution down to twice a month. Now, the famed sports publication will print just once per month.

The news of the print cuts, first reported by Yahoo, comes just six weeks after Sports Illustrated's new publisher laid off more than 40 employees with plans to replace them with contractors. In May, Meredith Corp. sold the intellectual property around Sports Illustrated to Authentic Brands for \$110 million. From there, Authentic Brands licensed the media operations to TheMaven, a digital publisher.

Representatives for Sports Illustrated and Authentic Brands did not immediately respond to TheWrap's requests for comment, but co-editor Stephen Cannella told the New York Post that the magazine "will be essentially a monthly with four season-preview issues and the SI Swimsuit for a total of 17 issues."

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

The Final Word



Shared by Bruce Lowitt

Today in History - November 22, 2019



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Nov. 22, the 326th day of 2019. There are 39 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 22, 1963, John F. Kennedy, the 35th president of the United States, was assassinated while riding in a motorcade in Dallas; Texas Gov. John B. Connally, in the same car as Kennedy, was seriously wounded; a suspect, Lee Harvey Oswald, was arrested; Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as president.

On this date:

In 1862, Giuseppe Verdi's opera "La Forza del Destino" had its world premiere in St. Petersburg, Russia.

In 1935, a flying boat, the China Clipper, took off from Alameda, California, carrying more than 100,000 pieces of mail on the first trans-Pacific airmail flight.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek (chang ky-shehk) met in Cairo to discuss measures for defeating Japan. Lyricist Lorenz Hart died in New York at age 48.

In 1955, comic Shemp Howard of "Three Stooges" fame died in Hollywood at age 60.

In 1967, the U.N. Security Council approved Resolution 242, which called for Israel to withdraw from territories it had captured the previous June, and implicitly called on adversaries to recognize Israel's right to exist.

In 1977, regular passenger service between New York and Europe on the supersonic Concorde began on a trial basis.

In 1980, death claimed actress Mae West at her Hollywood residence at age 87 and former House Speaker John W. McCormack in Dedham, Mass. at age 88.

In 1990, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, having failed to win re-election of the Conservative Party leadership on the first ballot, announced she would resign.

In 1995, acting swiftly to boost the Balkan peace accord, the U-N Security Council suspended economic sanctions against Serbia and eased the arms embargo against the states of the former Yugoslavia.

In 2004, Tens of thousands of demonstrators jammed downtown Kiev, denouncing Ukraine's presidential runoff election as fraudulent and chanting the name of their reformist candidate, Viktor Yushchenko (yoo-SHEN'-koh), who ended up winning a revote the following month.

In 2005, Angela Merkel (AHN'-geh-lah MEHR'-kuhl) took power as Germany's first female chancellor. Ted Koppel hosted his final edition of ABC News' "Nightline."

In 2017, former sports doctor Larry Nassar, accused of molesting at least 125 girls and young women while working for USA Gymnastics and Michigan State University, pleaded guilty to multiple charges of sexual assault. Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb general whose forces carried out the worst massacre in Europe since World War II, was convicted of genocide and other crimes by the United Nations' Yugoslav war crimes tribunal and sentenced to life behind bars.

Ten years ago: Iran said it had begun large-scale air defense war games aimed at protecting its nuclear facilities from attack. Michael Jackson posthumously won four American Music Awards; Taylor Swift was named artist of the year; Adam Lambert's sexually provocative performance drew complaints.

Five years ago: Twelve-year-old Tamir (tuh-MEER') Rice was shot and mortally wounded by police outside a Cleveland recreation center after brandishing what turned out to be a pellet gun. (A grand jury declined to indict either the patrolman who fired the fatal shot or a training officer.) Somalia's extremist al-Shabab rebels attacked a bus in northern Kenya, singling out and killing 28 passengers who could not recite an Islamic creed and were assumed to be non-Muslims.

One year ago: After a Thanksgiving night shooting at an Alabama shopping mall wounded two people, a responding officer shot and killed a 21-year-old black man, Emantic Bradford Jr., who police initially said had shot a teen at the mall; they later acknowledged that Bradford, who they said was fleeing the scene with a handgun, was not the triggerman. (A state investigation determined that the officer was justified in shooting Bradford because Bradford carried a weapon and appeared to pose a threat.) President Donald Trump used a Thanksgiving Day call to troops deployed overseas to air grievances about the courts, trade issues and migrants heading to the southern border. Spectators bundled up for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York; a temperature of 21 degrees at the start of the parade made it one of the coldest Thanksgivings in the city in decades. Nissan fired chairman Carlos Ghosn (gohn), who'd led the Japanese automaker for nearly two decades, after his arrest for alleged financial improprieties.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Michael Callan is 84. Actor Allen Garfield is 80. Animator and movie director Terry Gilliam is 79. Actor Tom Conti is 78. Singer Jesse Colin Young is 78. Astronaut Guion (GEYE'-uhn) Bluford is 77. International Tennis Hall of Famer Billie Jean King is 76. Rock musician-actor Steve Van Zandt (a.k.a. Little

Steven) is 69. Rock musician Tina Weymouth (The Heads; Talking Heads; The Tom Tom Club) is 69. Retired MLB All-Star Greg Luzinski is 69. Actress Lin Tucci is 68. Rock musician Lawrence Gowan is 63. Actor Richard Kind is 63. Actress Jamie Lee Curtis is 61. Alt-country singer Jason Ringenberg (Jason & the Scorchers) is 61. Actress Mariel Hemingway is 58. Actor Winsor Harmon is 56. Actor-turned-producer Brian Robbins is 56. Actor Stephen Geoffreys is 55. Rock musician Charlie Colin is 53. Actor Nicholas Rowe is 53. Actor Michael Kenneth Williams is 53. Actor Mark Ruffalo is 52. International Tennis Hall of Famer Boris Becker is 52. Actress Sidse (SIH'-sa) Babett Knudsen is 51. Country musician Chris Fryar (Zac Brown Band) is 49. Actor Josh Cooke is 40. Actor-singer Tyler Hilton is 36. Actress Scarlett Johansson is 35. Actor Jamie Campbell Bower is 31. Singer Candice Glover (TV: "American Idol") is 30. Actor Alden Ehrenreich is 30. Actor Dacre Montgomery is 25. Actress Mackenzie Lintz is 23.

Thought for Today: "A man does what he must [-] in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures [-] and that is the basis of all human morality." [-] President John F. Kennedy (1917-1963).

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.

Paul Stevens
Editor, Connecting newsletter
paulstevens46@gmail.com

Connecting newsletter, [14719 W 79th Ter, Lenexa, KS 66215](#)

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