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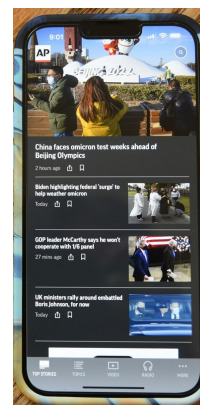
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Connecting

Jan. 13, 2023

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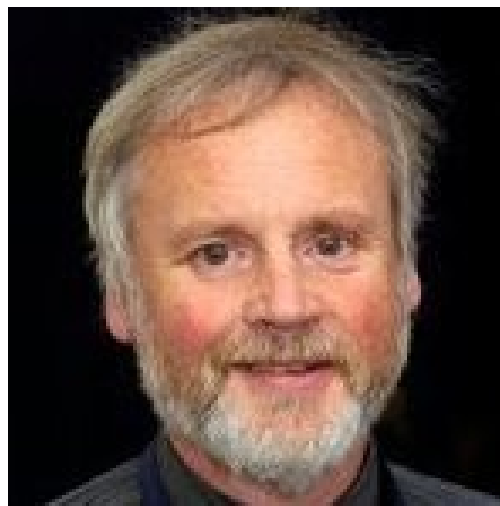
Good Friday morning on this Jan. 13, 2023,

Two Associated Press sports writers are heroes in the minds of those who witnessed them help save a sports stringer’s life when he collapsed last September in the Rutgers University press box while covering the Big Ten football game between Iowa and Rutgers.

The story of how [Ralph Russo](#) and [Tom Canavan](#) administered CPR and care to Everett Merrill, who was stringing the game for the Hawk Fanatic web site, was published in its Jan. 6 issue. Ralph is AP college football writer based in New York and Tom is AP New Jersey sports editor.

(Tom Canavan pictured at right, Ralph Russo pictured below.)

“Both were and remain a bit shy about their roles,” said colleague **Dave Zelio**, AP assistant sports editor. “As Ralph puts it: ‘It’s Everett’s story.’ That said, I am among the many who admire both of them for jumping in to save a man’s life.”



Mike Hlas of the Cedar Rapids Gazette was in the press box and witnessed what they did. “I was in awe,” Hlas said in the Hawk Fanatic story. “I was also so grateful because I couldn’t be of any help, and I felt helpless. I just don’t even like thinking about what it would have been like had those guys not been able to step in.”

The story leads to this question: do you have any similar stories to share - steps taken to “do something” while on the job? I hope you’ll share it.



Gene Johnson, an AP newsman in Portland, Ore., produced a great takeout for the AP wires Thursday on **Jack Smith**, longtime Portland AP photographer who died earlier this month. We bring you the story in today’s Connecting. His death was covered extensively in earlier editions of Connecting, but Gene’s story brings even more detail on the remarkable career of Smith.

Have a great weekend – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

Everett Merrill’s second chance at life had him covering Iowa hoops on Sunday at Rutgers



Everett Merrill (third from left) and his wife and two sons.

By Pat Harty
Editor, Hawk Fanatic (Jan. 6, 2023)

IOWA CITY, Iowa – I am thrilled and grateful to announce that Everett Merrill will cover the Iowa-Rutgers men's basketball game on Sunday in Piscataway, New Jersey for Hawk Fanatic.

Normally, I wouldn't make such an announcement, and then also write a column about hiring a stringer to cover a game.

But the circumstances surrounding Everett Merrill's relationship with Hawk Fanatic are far from normal.

Merrill nearly died while covering the Iowa-Rutgers football game for Hawk Fanatic on Sept. 24 in Piscataway.

And if not for the heroic efforts of two fellow journalists, he probably would have died from cardiac arrest.

A story that could've so easily ended tragically is now instead a story about second chances and the power of the human spirit.

It's a story about courage and about responding under the most difficult circumstances.

It's a story about knowing what to do when somebody's life is on the line, and about having the courage, knowledge, persistence, and the nerve to do it.

Everett Merrill will forever be grateful to fellow journalists Ralph Russo and Tom Canavan, both of whom work for the Associated Press, for helping to save his life.

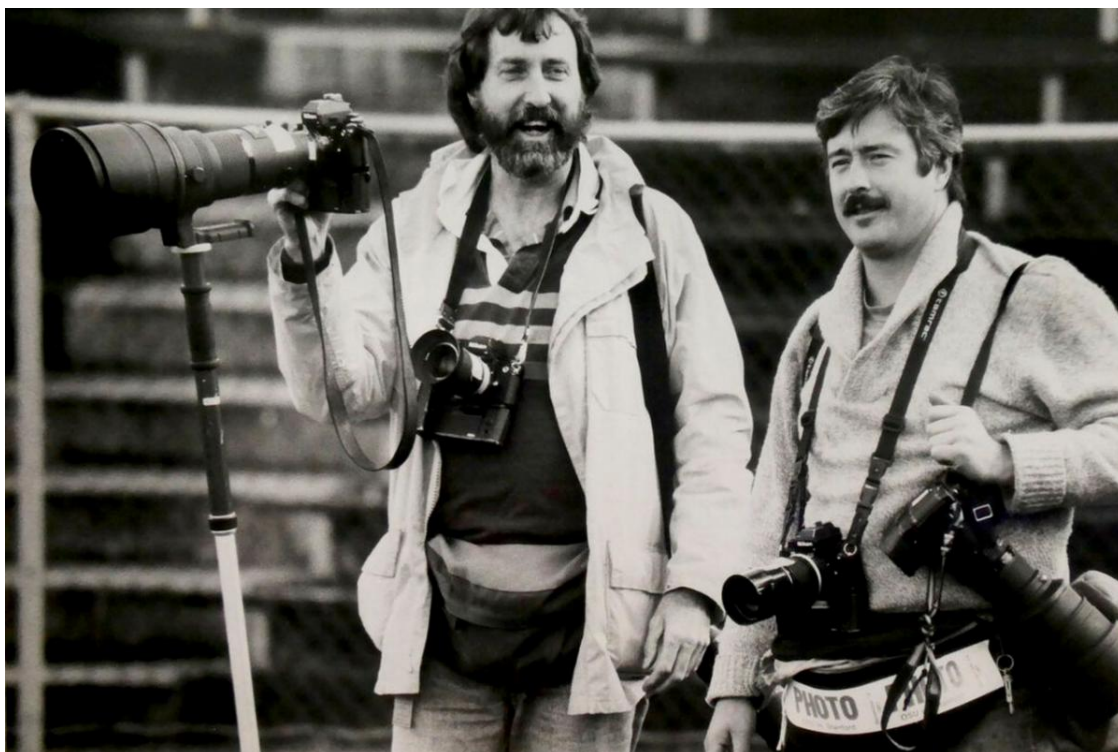
They were his first responders until the actual first responders arrived in the press box, and what Russo and Canavan did in those crucial first minutes after Merrill had lost consciousness almost certainly kept Merrill from dying on the floor of the press box.

"I'm glad to be able to see Iowa again under different circumstances this time," Merrill said Friday afternoon in a telephone interview.

The near-death experience has caused Merrill to value and appreciate his friendships and relationships even more than had before the incident.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Dave Zelio.

AP photographer Jack Smith, who shot Mount St. Helens, dies



Former Associated Press photographer Jack Smith, left, is seen with fellow photographer Steven Nehl, then of the Oregonian newspaper, during an NCAA college football game in Eugene, Ore., in the early 1990s. Jack Smith, an AP photographer who captured unforgettable shots of the eruption of Mount St. Helens, the Exxon-Valdez oil spill, the Olympics and many other events during his 35-year career with the news organization, passed away on Jan. 4, 2023, at his home in La Mesa, Calif. He was 80. (Greg Wahl-Stephens via AP)

By [GENE JOHNSON](#)

SEATTLE (AP) — Jack Smith, an Associated Press photographer who captured unforgettable shots of the eruption of Mount St. Helens, the Exxon-Valdez oil spill, boxer Mike Tyson biting off part of Evander Holyfield's ear, and weeping figure skater Tonya Harding at the Olympics during a 35-year career with the news organization, has died. He was 80.

Smith passed away on Jan. 4 at his home in La Mesa, California. He had cancer and had been in hospice care, said his wife, Judy Smith.

"People use the word legendary way too often, but in Jack's case it might be an understatement," said David Ake, the AP's director of photography. "He could make pictures and friends faster than anyone I have ever met. If there was a big story in the West, there would be Jack — with his huge smile, beating you to the scene and making pictures you only wish you could have made."

Smith joined the AP in Chicago as a photographer in 1966, after serving in the military in Vietnam, and spent a decade working there and in Washington, D.C. Then, in a bid to improve coverage in Oregon and lure some of the state's newspapers away from rival United Press International, the AP made him its first staff photographer in Portland in 1977, said Steve Graham, who was the bureau's news editor at the time.

Smith immediately improved the photo operation not just with his keen eye and knack for getting a definitive shot, but through his exceptional organizational skills — maintaining a stable of freelancers and developing relationships with photographers at AP member newspapers around the state, Graham said.

Smith arranged assignments for the many out-of-town photographers who arrived when Mount St. Helens, in southwestern Washington state, began rumbling in 1980. He was among the first to capture images of the volcano when it blew on May 18 that year, and he produced indelible pictures of oil-soaked wildlife following the 1989 Exxon-Valdez oil spill in Alaska's Prince William Sound.

Smith had a big personality to match his 6-foot-4 frame, and was known as "Chainsaw" for his resemblance to a stereotypical lumberjack. He was among a breed of hard-charging, competitive and sharp-elbowed wire service photographers who sought to get a good image at whatever cost and in whatever conditions, several colleagues recalled.

In 1988, he traveled to Barrow, Alaska, where several California gray whales had become trapped in Arctic Ocean ice. Alaska Native whalers had chopped holes where the animals could surface and breathe in an effort to save them.

Knowing he was going to be on that remote assignment for days or weeks, he persuaded the AP to let him rent a snowmobile so he could reach the icebound scene whenever he needed to, recalled Don Ryan, a former AP photographer in Portland who worked with Smith for about 25 years.

Furthermore, Ryan said, Smith convinced the company to buy him a shotgun, telling his bosses he needed it for protection against "rabid snow wolves."

Smith was also a talented sports photographer, staffing several Olympics and Super Bowls for the AP. He captured a famous photo of figure skater Tonya Harding at the Winter Games in Norway in 1994, with her leg up on the judges' stand, pleading tearfully to be allowed to replace a broken lace, soon after her ex-husband and bodyguard had been implicated in an attack on fellow skater Nancy Kerrigan.

Another of his famous sports shots came in 1997, when boxer Mike Tyson bit off part of Evander Holyfield's ear during a fight in Las Vegas.

Smith also loved to sail, frequently taking friends out on the Columbia River, traveling to the San Juan Islands in Washington state, and maintaining a 35-foot sailboat in retirement. Among his favorite assignments was the America's Cup yacht race, Ryan said.

"When you went sailing with Jack you weren't there for a pleasure cruise; you were working, pulling the ropes," Ryan said. "He went through life that way: He was the captain, and you were the crew."

Smith was exacting when it came to managing freelancers and cranky with any who failed to come back from an assignment with what he believed would have been the key shot. But those who worked with him said his high standards made them better.

“He was a taskmaster, but that’s how I learned,” said Eric Risberg, who has been an AP staff photographer since 1982 and credits Smith with launching his career by hiring him as a freelancer while Risberg was in college.

Greg Wahl-Stephens, a longtime freelancer for the AP who became close friends with Smith, recalled being assigned to a U.S. Olympic Committee awards ceremony in Portland in 1989.

Smith wanted him to get one photo featuring the two honorees, sprinter Florence Griffith Joyner and swimmer Matt Biondi. But the two did not appear onstage together, and Wahl-Stephens failed to get the shot.

“He fired me — again — on that particular occasion,” Wahl-Stephens said. “But he always let me back in whenever he fired me, and he took a guy who wanted to be (the famous French photographer Henri) Cartier-Bresson and turned me into a photojournalist.”

Smith grew up in Salt Lake City and first became interested in journalism as a boy, when he had a paper route and would stop by the newsroom to perform other tasks, Judy Smith said.

The couple were together for 34 years, after friends set them up on a blind date in Alaska, where Smith was covering a college basketball tournament.

“He just loved the excitement of the job,” she said. “He loved the travel. He liked being good at something, and he was really good at what he did.”

Smith leaves behind his wife; two children, Melissa and Matthew; and a granddaughter, Alexis.

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

More on those who were on White House press bus when JFK died

[Stephen Singer](#) - Robert MacNeil, formerly of NBC News, was on the press bus in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, and gave an account of that horrible day as he reported the events.

As a reporter who's covered stories of far less complexity and significance, I'm in awe of reporters who gathered information under chaotic circumstances while looking for a phone to get the information to their newsrooms.

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[Carl P. Leubsdorf](#) - Nov. 22 addendum: I tell you who else is alive who was in the motorcade that day in Dallas: Secret Service Agent Clint Hill, who was in a trailing car as Mrs. Kennedy’s agent, famously ran forward and sought to climb aboard the

president's limousine when he heard the shots in a futile effort to shield the Kennedys. Clint is 91, unfortunately not well, and lives in California with his wife, Lisa McCubbin, co-author of his five books on his experiences with the former First Lady.

Pay Phones

Bryan Brumley - In the realm of "pay phones," I still kick myself about an incident behind the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in December 1979. Way before cell phones. The Moslem Students Following the Iman's Line were holding 52 U.S. diplomats inside the compound, which they dubbed the "Nest of Spies." The walled complex covered a couple of downtown blocks. This was the biggest story in the world for months, and contributed to the defeat of President Jimmy Carter. The student militants, allied with the Revolutionary Guards, had invited three American clergymen to visit the hostages at Christmas. One was Rev. William Sloane Coffin, the Yale University Chaplain prominent as a civil rights and peace activist during the Vietnam era.

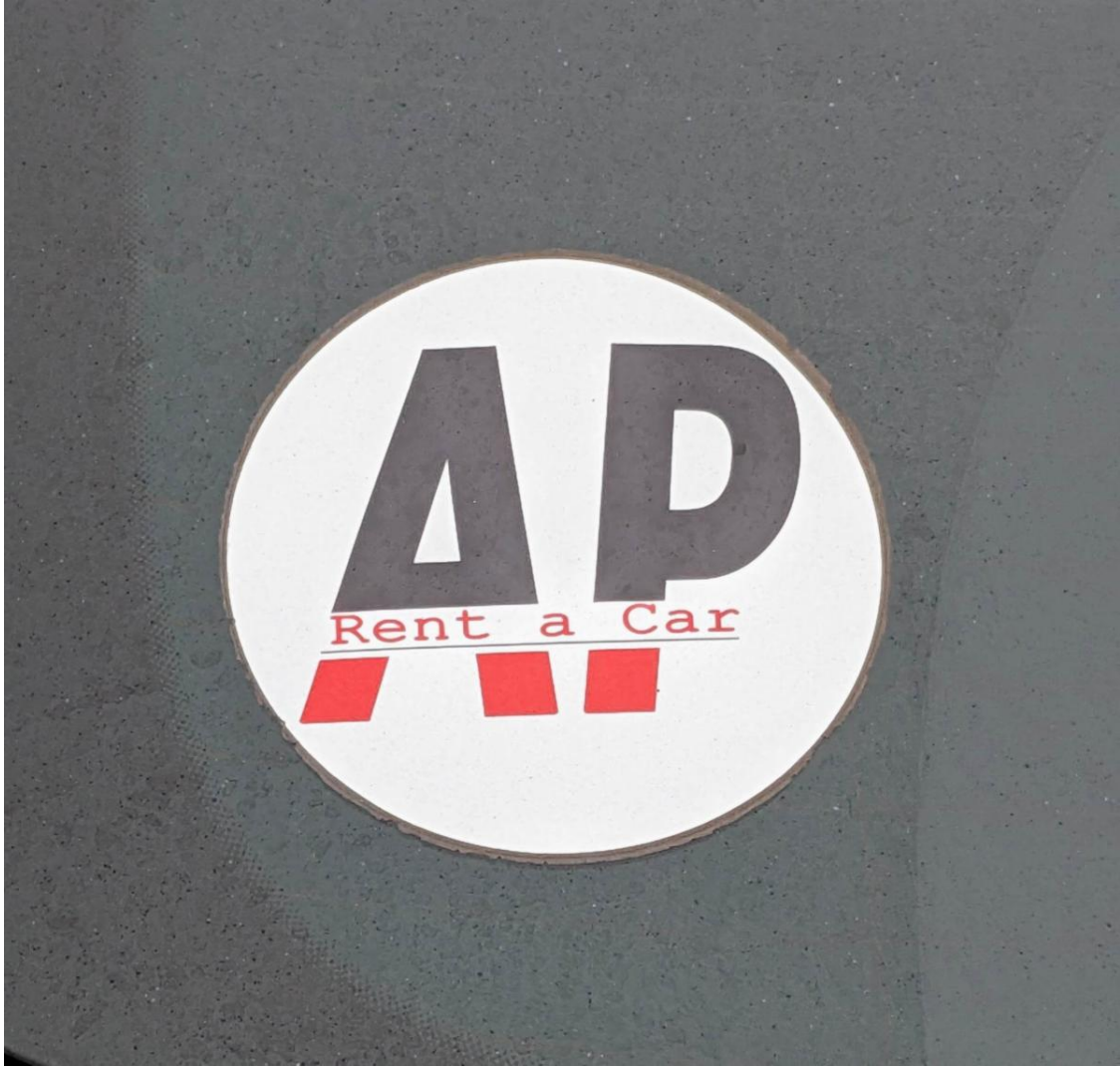
I was a young reporter on temporary assignment in Tehran based on the Farsi I'd learned during a free-lance stint in Iran before joining the AP Washington bureau in 1977. I was familiar with the commercial area around the embassy along what was then called Takhte Jamshid Street (since renamed for Ayatollah Mahmoud Teleghani). I was sent with another reporter and photographer in a car that chased the clergymen at high speed through the streets of Tehran to a back-alley embassy entrance. There were no pay phones, or even commercial establishments within view. New York wanted an update as soon as the clergymen entered the embassy. I didn't want to disappoint.

I knew of an Indian style restaurant along Takhte-Jamshid, a 15-minute walk away. I could cut that time in half by running through the back alleys. With a word to my colleagues, I sped off through the maze of narrow lanes. They were dark and empty. Rounding one corner, I ran into a row of four Revolutionary Guards. They took several steps back and trained their assault rifles on me. They looked as scared as I was. I threw up my arms and shouted in Farsi: "Kharbar jozasthe-am!" "I'm a Reporter." In those days, the Revolutionary Guards were happy to see American journalists covering their actions. Just not in a dark alley. I explained I was looking for a pay phone. After a few minutes, they let me go. I walked slowly through the alleys, down the main street and made the call. A little late. But we beat UPI.

The Power of Connecting

John Carland - In the wake of my brief bio appearing in October, Connecting connected me with a friend I hadn't heard from in years. That is, journalist, author, and historian Peter Eisner read the bio and got in touch. We had earlier met in a reading group of (mostly) Capitol Hill denizens and when the reading group evolved (devolved?) into a gossip group--high end gossip, of course, about politicians, historians, and others--its end was in sight. Fast forward to yesterday and you find John and Peter enjoying food, drink, and talk at Julio's in Ballston.

AP Sighting



[Kevin Walsh](#) - On the Portuguese island of Madeira. Further on this: Was founded by two friends, Andre and Paulo, hence the "AP Rent a Car."

From today's 'Birthday Sailor'



Hilmi Toros - Emeritus sailors don't give up the ship, they become gardeners...taken in Fethiye, Türkiye.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Hilmi Toros](#)

On Saturday to...

[Mark Thayer](#)

On Sunday to...

[Bob Young](#)

Stories of interest

Kodak Poised to Raise the Price of Film by Up to 40%

(Petapixel)

Kodak is set to raise the price of its film by upwards of 40% globally starting this month, a not insignificant amount that may make it difficult for hobbyists to continue to enjoy analog photography.

In December, Kosmo Foto reported that Kodak Alaris, the company responsible for the distribution of Eastman Kodak's photographic films, planned to raise the price of its films by varying amounts, with the overall average coming out to about 17%. The price increases would be less significant on multipacks of film, but overall the price disparity that exists between Kodak Gold 200 and Colorplus 200 — some of the company's most popular consumer-grade color negative film — would close.

Kosmo Foto reported that these price increases were slated to take effect in March.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac, who noted:

With the surge in interest over shooting FILM, Kodak cannot keep up with the new demand and is having to hire people. Logically, increased production should theoretically lower material costs and increase the company's profit coffers. Not so it seems.

I did some internet searching and found back in the 1970s a 36-exposure Tri-X was around \$1.30 per roll. In 1984 it was \$1.85 a roll. In 2005 Adorama was selling it for \$3.69 a roll. In 2007 B&H sold it for \$4.99 a roll. In 2014 it was around \$7 per roll. In 2021 it was \$7.99 a roll. And today, B&H Photo sells it for \$13 a roll. With the price hike it could be over \$18 each.

Yikes and OUCH!

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Phoenix mayor apologizes to reporter who was detained by Phoenix police (Arizona Republic)

Miguel Torres

Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego apologized to a Wall Street Journal reporter who was interviewing people outside of a north Phoenix bank in November when police detained him.

Phoenix police Officer Caleb Zimmerman cuffed and detained Wall Street Journal reporter Dion Rabouin outside of a Chase bank branch after employees there called in a trespass complaint.

Rabouin was on assignment working on a story about banking and approached customers for interviews before they walked in.

According to Rabouin, he talked to bank employees about what he was doing but they never asked him to leave before they called the police.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

Today in History - Jan. 13, 2023



Today is Friday, Jan. 13, the 13th day of 2023. There are 352 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 13, 2021, President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House over the violent Jan. 6 siege of the Capitol, becoming the only president to be twice impeached; ten Republicans joined Democrats in voting to impeach Trump on a charge of "incitement of insurrection." (Trump would again be acquitted by the Senate in a vote after his term was over.)

On this date:

In 1733, James Oglethorpe and some 120 English colonists arrived at Charleston, South Carolina, while en route to settle in present-day Georgia.

In 1794, President George Washington approved a measure adding two stars and two stripes to the American flag, following the admission of Vermont and Kentucky to the Union. (The number of stripes was later reduced to the original 13.)

In 1898, Emile Zola's famous defense of Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, "J'accuse," (zhah-KOOZ'), was published in Paris.

In 1941, a new law went into effect granting Puerto Ricans U.S. birthright citizenship. Novelist and poet James Joyce died in Zurich, Switzerland, less than a month before his 59th birthday.

In 1964, Roman Catholic Bishop Karol Wojtyla (voy-TEE'-wah) (the future Pope John Paul II) was appointed Archbishop of Krakow, Poland, by Pope Paul VI.

In 1982, an Air Florida 737 crashed into Washington, D.C.'s 14th Street Bridge and fell into the Potomac River while trying to take off during a snowstorm, killing a total of 78 people, including four motorists on the bridge; four passengers and a flight attendant survived.

In 1987, West German police arrested Mohammed Ali Hamadi, a suspect in the 1985 hijacking of a TWA jetliner and the killing of a U.S. Navy diver who was on board. (Although convicted and sentenced to life, Hamadi was paroled by Germany in December 2005 and returned home to Lebanon.)

In 1990, L. Douglas Wilder of Virginia became the nation's first elected Black governor as he took the oath of office in Richmond.

In 1992, Japan apologized for forcing tens of thousands of Korean women to serve as sex slaves for its soldiers during World War II, citing newly uncovered documents that showed the Japanese army had had a role in abducting the so-called "comfort women."

In 2000, Microsoft chairman Bill Gates stepped aside as chief executive and promoted company president Steve Ballmer to the position.

In 2001, an earthquake estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey at magnitude 7.7 struck El Salvador; more than 840 people were killed.

In 2011, a funeral was held in Tucson, Arizona, for 9-year-old Christina Taylor Green, the youngest victim of a mass shooting that also claimed five other lives and critically wounded Rep. Gabrielle Giffords.

In 2020, at a royal family summit in eastern England, Queen Elizabeth II brokered a deal to secure the future of the monarchy; it would allow Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, to live part-time in Canada.

Ten years ago: A Cairo appeals court overturned Hosni Mubarak's life sentence and ordered a retrial of the former Egyptian president for failing to prevent the killing of hundreds of protesters during the 2011 uprising that toppled his regime. (Mubarak was later ordered released.) "Argo" won best motion picture drama at the Golden Globes; "Les Miserables" won best picture musical or comedy.

Five years ago: A false alarm that warned of a ballistic missile headed for Hawaii sent the islands into a panic, with people abandoning cars on a highway and preparing to flee their homes; officials apologized and said the alert was sent when someone hit the wrong button during a shift change. Two Army captains who met at West Point, Daniel Hall and Vincent Franchino, returned there to be married, in what The New York Times said was believed to be the first same-sex marriage of active-duty personnel at the military academy.

One year ago: The Supreme Court found that the Biden administration had overstepped its authority by requiring that employees at large businesses get a COVID-19 vaccine or test regularly and wear a mask on the job; the court allowed the administration to proceed with a vaccine mandate for most health care workers. Two U.S. science agencies, NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said 2021 was the sixth hottest year on record globally, part of a long-term warming trend.

Today's birthdays: Actor Frances Sternhagen is 93. TV personality Nick Clooney is 89. Comedian Charlie Brill is 85. Actor Billy Gray is 85. Actor Richard Moll is 80. Rock musician Trevor Rabin is 69. Rock musician James Lomenzo (Megadeth) is 64. Actor Kevin Anderson is 63. Actor Julia Louis-Dreyfus is 62. Rock singer Graham "Suggs" McPherson (Madness) is 62. Country singer Trace Adkins is 61. Actor Penelope Ann Miller is 59. Actor Patrick Dempsey is 57. Actor Suzanne Cryer is 56. Actor Traci Bingham is 55. Actor Keith Coogan is 53. TV producer-writer Shonda Rhimes is 53. Actor Nicole Eggert is 51. Actor Ross McCall is 47. Actor Michael Pena is 47. Actor Orlando Bloom is 46. Meteorologist Ginger Zee (TV: "Good Morning America") is 42. Actor Ruth Wilson is 41. Actor Julian Morris is 40. Actor Beau Mirchoff is 34. Actor Liam Hemsworth is 33. NHL center Connor McDavid is 26.

Got a story or photos to share?

Connecting is a daily newsletter published Monday through Friday that focuses on retired and former Associated Press employees, present-day employees, and news industry and journalism school colleagues. It began in 2013 and past issues can be found by clicking [Connecting Archive](#) in the masthead. Its author, Paul Stevens, retired from the AP in 2009 after a 36-year career as a newsman in Albany and St. Louis,

correspondent in Wichita, chief of bureau in Albuquerque, Indianapolis and Kansas City, and Midwest vice president based in Kansas City.

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:

- **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.
- **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?
- **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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