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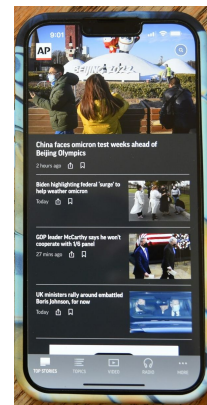
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Connecting

Dec. 28, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this Dec. 28, 2023,

Ray Pike, a 44-year veteran of The Associated Press who spent most of his career in the AP's New York bureau after earlier work in Newark, died Tuesday at the age of 90.

Shiva at 32 Mount Vernon Street in Arlington, MA, today to Tuesday, Jan. 2, (except for Saturday), afternoons 1pm to 6pm.



Ray Pike, flanked by his wife Nancy at left and by one of their grandchildren.

“He was smart and wry,” said colleague **Beth Harpaz**. “He seemed crusty on the outside but was really quite sweet, a super-fast and trustworthy writer who just had the whole 20th century history of NYC in his head (or so it seemed -- we didn't have Google in those days -- we just asked Ray). He also coined the term Teflon Don for John Gotti after the mobster's second acquittal. He was just sitting there when we got word of the verdict in the buro and he chuckled and it just tumbled out of his mouth, ‘He's the Teflon Don!’

Click [here](#) for a link to his obituary. And if you have a favorite memory of Ray, please send it along. I'd love to get a fuller story about a phrase he once used in a story about possibly inflated crowd estimates for a World Series parade: “Only a grinch would cavil.”

We lead with a year-end message to AP's worldwide staff Wednesday from **Julie Pace**, executive editor. In it, she noted: "Our teams in Ukraine, Russia, Gaza and Israel are particularly on our minds, along with all of those covering conflict and repressive governments. Our unwavering commitment to these stories, and to our journalists in these locations, will continue in 2024."

Connecting will be taking the rest of the year off. Here's wishing you a Happy 2024. Got any thoughts, resolutions or whatever on the coming year. Share them with Ye Olde Editor. See you in your Inbox next Tuesday.

Here's to a great day – be safe, stay healthy, live each day to your fullest.

Paul

Year-end note to staff from Julie Pace, AP executive editor

As 2023 comes to an end, I want to thank you for everything you have done this year to uphold AP's mission of delivering fact-based, independent journalism from every region of the world.

This has been a year of great change and achievement across the AP. It's also been a year that has tested and challenged us, with so many AP journalists working under extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. Our teams in Ukraine, Russia, Gaza and Israel are particularly on our minds, along with all of those covering conflict and repressive governments. Our unwavering commitment to these stories, and to our journalists in these locations, will continue in 2024.

I want to note just a few of the many highlights from this year:

- We launched a new website that is bringing AP's journalism to broader audiences in more modern ways. So many of you have embraced the goal of producing news fit for a digital world. Our report now has more visually-led storytelling and live video, snappier headlines, and new story forms. We'll have more opportunities for experimentation as we launch our new mobile app in early 2024.
- AP journalism was honored at the highest levels, including a pair of Pulitzer Prizes, a Polk award and two Royal Television Society awards for standout coverage of the war in Ukraine. Just last week, Mstyslav Chernov's powerful film collaboration with Frontline PBS was shortlisted in two categories for the Academy Awards – a first for the AP, and a real testament to the power and impact of eyewitness journalism.
- We secured and renewed key foundation funding to support deeper, more extensive coverage of topics including global threats to democracy, health and science, religion and gender. We also made significant progress in making grant funding accessible to more journalists across the AP, which was particularly notable during this summer of extreme weather exacerbated by climate change.
- AP led the way in developing editorial standards for the use and coverage of generative AI – standards that have been embraced across the news industry. The guidance makes clear our commitment to the essential role of journalists in determining and analyzing facts, as well as our embrace of opportunities to safely experiment with new technology that can improve our workflows.
- We made major investments in technology and equipment that will help our journalists produce the highest quality work, and do so safely. This includes the launch earlier this year of the MAM (Media Asset Management system), which has significantly increased the speed of video production, as well as purchases of next

generation Sony cameras and high-quality safety gear that will be distributed in key locations around the world in early 2024.

Next year will certainly be a busy one, with elections in the U.S., India, Mexico and numerous other countries, the Summer Olympics, and two ongoing wars. We'll talk more after the holidays about our News priorities for 2024 and how we'll tackle the challenges ahead. But for now, thank you for all you do to inform the world and make AP a special place to work.

A pleasant surprise when visiting Springfield Museums



Amy Sancetta - On the way to Boston for the family Christmas, we overnighted in Springfield, MA, and spent a few hours trolling the massive and wonderful Springfield Museums. Their new exhibit: "What They Saw", features 200 years of women artists. There are only a handful of photographs in the show, including one by Dorothea Lange, and one of them is actually mine.

I made the picture at the Olympics in Atlanta in 1996 and it shows the winners of the Women's 4x100m relay.

The museum director and a couple of other dignitaries even came out to meet us! It was a pretty darn exciting and fun day!

On Tad Bartimus' Vietnam memory

[Andy Lippman](#) - What a wonderful anecdote by Tad Bartimus in Wednesday's Connecting. For those of us who have been her friends, it should be no surprise that she found a way to help a youngster in need.

She has been mentoring youngsters ever since her time in Vietnam. She helped students in her hometown in Hana get full college scholarships, and she and her husband Dean developed a curriculum which showed teachers how to do the same kind of thing in their states.

Tad never mentions that she came back from Vietnam a very sick woman. Instead, what she tells us is a story of hope and generosity.

I've always been in awe of her writing ability and am equally impressed of what she did for that young boy - getting him off the streets, and to the United States.

I hope that somewhere in the U.S. that boy - now a man - remembers Tad and has in his life helped other people.

Tad, thanks for sharing a story which is so appropriate for the holiday season.

It's a story of paying forward-something that we should all aspire to in 2024.

A salute to her first journalist mentor

[Joyce Rosenberg](#) - In this post, I want to take a chance and hopefully won't be pissing off someone very dear and important to me -- I feel it's right to thank him publicly and also celebrate the great soul he is.

Virgil Scudder was the first journalist I worked with who recognized my talent, ability and drive in my first weeks in the business, when I was a desk assistant at WINS Radio. Virgil recommended me for a full-time position and I got it. And that job led me later that year to NBC Radio, back to WINS two years later as a writer and to the AP and a great career there.

The reporters and writers at WINS in 1975 generally weren't a group of people who appreciated young journalists (although my last news director, Adam Clayton Powell III, absolutely did). While I was grateful for what Virgil did for me, I didn't recognize till years later just how special it was in that group. It was a big deal.

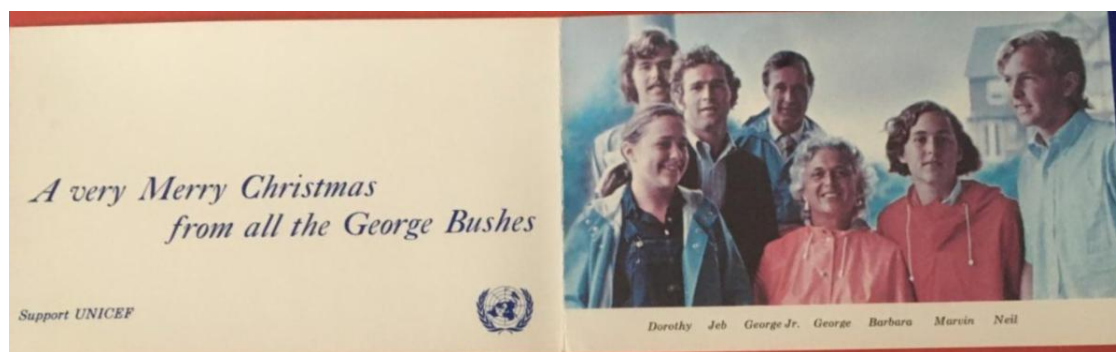
Virgil was truly one of my first and biggest mentors (we were also at NBC together). I began learning the nuts and bolts from him. I remember his enthusiasm as he quickly banged out a breaking story on a typewriter; it was infectious. He also had a wonderful sense of humor and perspective about the world.

I also learned a few life lessons from him. I wasn't so green that I didn't have a big mouth, and he told me one day, "No one likes a wiseass, Joyce." Of course, he was right.

Virgil was also a mentor for me about the theater -- he was WINS' drama critic and he helped me appreciate a good play.

After we both left NBC, we kept in touch, and he has been one of my biggest cheerleaders, even down to a post he made about me today that has had me crying. I know we can get back what we put into a relationship, but Virgil has put much more in than I have. Virgil, I will thank you and love you forever. I know I'm overdue for a visit with you.

John Scali – another AP grad who became U.S. ambassador



Shirley Christian - To people who remember the Cuban Missile Crisis, circa 1962, the name John Scali will surely strike a chord. He was then a prominent ABC diplomatic correspondent in Washington who, somehow, became an intermediary in passing notes between a Soviet official and Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

Before his ABC career Scali had spent years with the AP, starting during World War II in Europe. After the war, he reported from the AP Washington bureau before moving to television.

Early in the Nixon Administration the president asked Scali to join him in a media advisory role, and Scali accompanied Nixon on most of his foreign trips until early 1973 when he was named to replace George H. W. Bush as ambassador to the United Nations.

That was during my three years in the AP's UN. bureau, and I recall meeting him and his new, second wife at his first reception, along with my senior colleagues Bill Oatis and Max Harrelson. I left in a few months on a Nieman Fellowship, so I don't have other memories.

Although he seemed quite happy to meet us, I recall thinking he would never replace Bush in the looks and charm department. George Bush, to me, qualified as one of the two handsomest men in New York, alongside Mayor John Lindsey.

These things came back to me when I glanced up from my desk and saw the framed Christmas card I received from the Bushes during their UN days.

Remembering Justice Sandra Day O'Connor



Justices O'Connor and Ginsburg surrounded by statues of men in the U.S. Capitol, 2001. Photo/David Kennerly.

[David Kennerly](#) - In 1996 when son Byron was twelve years old, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor gave him a tour of the U.S. Supreme Court building. He had first visited her there when he was three months old, but of course had no recollection of that. This encounter, on the other hand, was one he will always remember. We started in her chambers, then made our way through the Great Hall to see the courtroom at the other end. We entered through its big oak doors. It was so impressive, the nine empty chairs straight ahead of us. Justice O'Connor explained where everyone sat based on their seniority, the chief justice always in the middle. After answering all of Byron's questions Justice O'Connor had a surprise for him. She said, "This is not the highest court in the land." Byron was perplexed. She put her arm around Byron and guided us up a few flights of stairs to the fifth floor. We walked into a gym, and she pointed to a basketball court. "This is the highest court in the land!" Byron burst out laughing, the justice was highly pleased with his reaction, and that memorable moment is cherished.

I stayed in touch with Justice O'Connor over her years on the Court, and in 2001 made one of my top ten photos thanks to her. She told me she was going with Justice Ruth

Bader Ginsburg, the second woman on the Court, to attend a meeting of the Women's Congressional Caucus at the U.S. Capitol, would I like to come? The result was a classic moment. The first two women Supreme Court Justices seated in Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol surrounded by statues of white men. The irony was not lost on me or them. How things had changed!

Flash forward 27 years. I was back in the Great Hall under somber circumstances. I photographed the nine current justices of the U.S. Supreme Court as they stood behind the casket of their late colleague Sandra Day O'Connor. I mourned the loss of an old friend and the civility she represented during her time on the Court.

Read more [here](#).

Nick Jesdanun '91 Memorial Fund

EDITOR'S NOTE: Nick Jesdanun was deputy technology editor for The Associated Press when he died in 2020 of coronavirus-related complications at age 51. Click [here](#) for a story on his death.

Dear supporters of the Nick Jesdanun '91 Memorial Summer Opportunity Fund,

We are writing to say happy holidays, and to provide a brief update on the status of Nick's summer opportunity fund at Swarthmore.

With generous support from 189 separate donors, we have assembled pledges of roughly \$160,000 – enough to fund a summer internship stipend of \$6,000 forever, meaning that Nick's name will live on at the college he so loved. Staff at the college have noted how unusual it is to receive 189 relatively small donations that fully endow a summer stipend, and we have answered back that our success is a testament to the generous, joyful life Nick lived.



Nick's summer award stipend targets students interested in journalism, technology, or public policy, and is housed under the auspices of the Richard Rubin Scholar Mentoring Program, which manages the student selection process. We delivered our first summer stipend this year to a student interested in journalism, whose project involved documenting an initiative that led to a Black birthing center in New Jersey.

However, Nick's fund will not fully vest until June 2025. Until then, please consider donating bridge funding so that we can support summer fellowships over the next year or two. To do so, please use the College's giving website, selecting "Other" and typing in "Rubin Internship Fund in memory of Nick Jesdanun '91." Please also email [Heather](#) or [Cammy](#) to let us know to look out for the gift.

If you are in the process of fulfilling a pledge, making a pledge payment now will also help the fund to fully vest.

Finally, we feel lucky that one of Nick's final and lasting gifts was to bring us together again, whether through Zoom calls between the core team of fund-raisers and donors, at the on-campus memorial service we organized in 2022, at reunions and at chance meetings, and through renewed friendships across time and space.

(Shared by [Ted Duncombe](#))

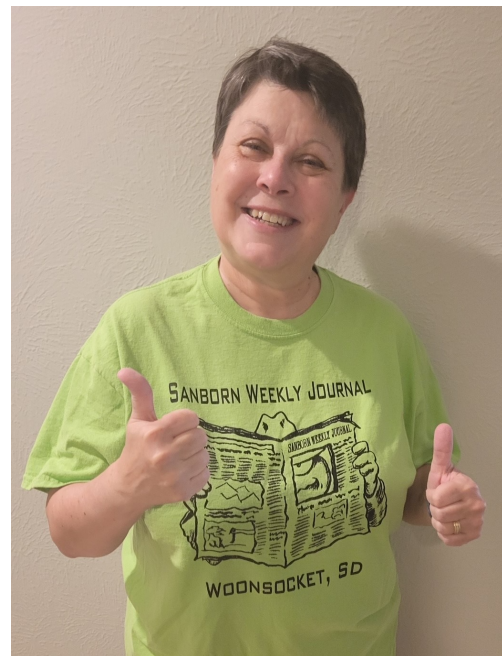
Small-town Journalism: South Dakota's Sanborn Weekly Journal

By [DIANA HEIDGERD](#)

WOONSOCKET, S.D. _ Many of you probably need a map to find the 700-resident Central South Dakota town of Woonsocket.

It's literally near and dear to me, a place where my farm family from Alpena, South Dakota, attended church most Sundays while I was growing up. I still have many "Jensen" (my maiden name) relatives in the area.

It's also a great reminder that big-time journalism like The Associated Press, where so many of us based our careers, isn't the only story in town.



Woonsocket is home to the [Sanborn Weekly Journal, Sanborn Journal | Serving the Communities of Artesian, Letcher, Forestburg and Woonsocket](#). It's owned by my cousin Valerie Jensen Hohn's daughter Tara Weber and her husband Rod Weber, who's also superintendent of the Woonsocket school district.

One of the TV stations serving Sioux Falls and much of the region recently did a feature on how Tara and Rod are doing their part to help Woonsocket survive and thrive.

[Multi-use building keeping businesses in the Woonsocket community](#)

And if you've never heard of Woonsocket or Alpena, consider this -- one of my favorite stories is that many of these small South Dakota communities were named by railroad executives (and other business leaders) for their hometowns, as the lines were being built.

Think: Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

And: Alpena, Michigan.

Connecting sky shot – Minnesota



Karren Mills - No snow- and ice-covered lakes in much of Minnesota this year but we do have brilliant sunrises.

Stories of interest

The New York Times sues OpenAI and Microsoft for using its stories to train chatbots (AP)

BY HALELUYA HADERO AND DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Times is striking back against the threat that artificial intelligence poses to the news industry, filing a federal lawsuit Wednesday against OpenAI and Microsoft seeking to end the practice of using its stories to train chatbots.

The Times says the companies are threatening its livelihood by effectively stealing billions of dollars worth of work by its journalists, in some cases spitting out Times' material verbatim to people who seek answers from generative artificial intelligence like OpenAI's ChatGPT. The newspaper's lawsuit was filed in federal court in Manhattan and follows what appears to be a breakdown in talks between the newspaper and the two companies, which began in April.

The media has already been pummeled by a migration of readers to online platforms. While many publications — most notably the Times — have successfully carved out a digital space, the rapid development of AI threatens to significantly upend the publishing industry.

Web traffic is an important component of the paper's advertising revenue and helps drive subscriptions to its online site. But the outputs from AI chatbots divert that traffic away from the paper and other copyright holders, the Times says, making it less likely that users will visit the original source for the information.

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

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News anchor fired after appearing in broadcast with Starbucks cup amid boycotts over Israel (Fox News)

Story by Kristine Parks

An award-winning news broadcaster for Turkey's TGRT Haber was immediately fired after appearing on camera with a Starbucks coffee cup, the news channel announced on Sunday.

TGRT Haber revealed Meltem Günay and her show's director were let go after she presented the news with a Starbucks cup in front of her during a live broadcast on Christmas Eve.

In a statement posted to X and shared by the Messenger News, TGRT Haber said Günay had violated strict advertising restrictions.

The station also said the anchor had upset viewers in the predominantly Muslim country who had "sensitivities" regarding Starbucks' stance on the Israel-Hamas war.

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

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Social media companies made \$11 billion in US ad revenue from minors, Harvard study finds (AP)

BY BARBARA ORTUTAY AND HALELUYA HADERO

Social media companies collectively made over \$11 billion in U.S. advertising revenue from minors last year, according to a study from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health published on Wednesday.

The researchers say the findings show a need for government regulation of social media since the companies that stand to make money from children who use their platforms have failed to meaningfully self-regulate. They note such regulations, as well as greater transparency from tech companies, could help alleviate harms to youth mental health and curtail potentially harmful advertising practices that target children and adolescents.

To come up with the revenue figure, the researchers estimated the number of users under 18 on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube in 2022 based on population data from the U.S. Census and survey data from Common Sense Media and Pew Research. They then used data from research firm eMarketer, now called Insider Intelligence, and Qustodio, a parental control app, to estimate each platform's U.S. ad revenue in 2022 and the time children spent per day on each platform. After that, the researchers said they built a simulation model using the data to estimate how much ad revenue the platforms earned from minors in the U.S.

Read more [here](#).

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As social media guardrails fade and AI deepfakes go mainstream, experts warn of impact on elections (AP)

BY ALI SWENSON AND CHRISTINE FERNANDO

NEW YORK (AP) — Nearly three years after rioters stormed the U.S. Capitol, the false election conspiracy theories that drove the violent attack remain prevalent on social media and cable news: suitcases filled with ballots, late-night ballot dumps, dead people voting.

Experts warn it will likely be worse in the coming presidential election contest. The safeguards that attempted to counter the bogus claims the last time are eroding, while the tools and systems that create and spread them are only getting stronger.

Many Americans, egged on by former President Donald Trump, have continued to push the unsupported idea that elections throughout the U.S. can't be trusted. A majority of Republicans (57%) believe Democrat Joe Biden was not legitimately elected president.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Peg Coughlin.

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Radio industry remembers Tom Foty

Longtime radio news anchor, reporter, manager and technology consultant Tom Foty died Dec. 26 at the age of 77.

Foty has been with CBS News Radio since 1997, most recently serving as a fill-in anchor. Born in Budapest, Foty fled with his family to America following the failed 1956 Hungarian Revolution after the Soviets destroyed his home. He would attend City College of New York where he served as News Director and General Manager of its radio station while working as a stringer for the New York Daily News, the Associated Press, and 1010 WINS. He would then spend time with WINS, 98.7 WOR-FM/WXLO, and NPR in various news and technical capacities prior to joining United Press International's radio network in 1973. Foty would rise from editor and reporter to Washington Bureau Manager and Executive Editor of UPI Radio until leaving in 1984 to join NBC News Radio as Deputy Washington Bureau Chief before moving with the network following its sale to Westwood One where he became responsible for the purchase and operation of their first computer.

Foty would then join Unistar Radio Networks as News Manager, while serving as a consultant to other news organizations including the BBC, USA Today Sky Radio, and ABC News Radio for launching their IT systems. He would then co-found AudioCenter Productions as one of the first internet streaming services. In 1997, Foty would join WTOP Washington DC as a reporter and technical advisor and would add duties at CBS News Radio in 1998.

Read more [here](#).

The Final Word



Shared by Doug Pizac



My desire to be well-informed is currently at odds with my desire to remain sane.

Shared by Reed Saxon

Today in History - Dec. 28, 2023



Today is Thursday, Dec. 28, the 362nd day of 2023. There are three days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 28, 2014, the U.S. war in Afghanistan, fought for 13 bloody years and still raging, came to a formal end with a quiet flag-lowering ceremony in Kabul that marked the transition of the fighting from U.S.-led combat troops to the country's own security forces.

On this date:

In 1612, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei observed the planet Neptune, but mistook it for a star. (Neptune wasn't officially discovered until 1846 by Johann Gottfried Galle.)

In 1895, the Lumiere brothers, Auguste and Louis, held the first public showing of their movies in Paris.

In 1908, a major earthquake followed by a tsunami devastated the Italian city of Messina, killing at least 70,000 people.

In 1912, San Francisco's Municipal Railway began operations with Mayor James Rolph Jr. at the controls of Streetcar No. 1 as 50,000 spectators looked on.

In 1945, Congress officially recognized the Pledge of Allegiance.

In 1972, Kim Il Sung, the premier of North Korea, was named the country's president under a new constitution.

In 1973, the Endangered Species Act was signed into law by President Richard Nixon.

In 1981, Elizabeth Jordan Carr, the first American "test-tube" baby, was born in Norfolk, Virginia.

In 1991, nine people died in a crush of people trying to get into a rap celebrity basketball game at City College in New York.

In 2007, Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was laid to rest as the country's army tried to quell a frenzy of rioting in the wake of her assassination.

In 2012, Russia's President Vladimir Putin signed a law banning Americans from adopting Russian children.

In 2015, a grand jury in Cleveland declined to indict a white rookie police officer in the killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice, a Black youth who was shot while playing with what turned out to be a pellet gun.

In 2016, film star Debbie Reynolds, who lit up the screen in "Singin' in the Rain" and other Hollywood classics, died at age 84, a day after losing her daughter, Carrie Fisher, who was 60.

In 2017, Rose Marie, who began her career in show business as a child in the 1920s and co-starred on "The Dick Van Dyke Show" in the 1960s, died at her Los Angeles-area home at the age of 94.

In 2021, former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid died at his Nevada home of complications from pancreatic cancer; the Democrat was 82. Hall of Fame football coach and broadcaster John Madden died at 85.

In 2022, New Orleans music legend Walter “Wolfman” Washington, a cornerstone of the city’s musical nightlife for decades, died at age 79.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Dame Maggie Smith is 89. Former Democratic Sen. Tim Johnson of South Dakota is 77. Rock singer-musician Edgar Winter is 77. Actor Denzel Washington is 69. TV personality Gayle King is 69. Actor Chad McQueen is 63. Country singer-musician Marty Roe (Diamond Rio) is 63. Actor Malcolm Gets is 60. Actor Mauricio Mendoza is 54. Actor Elaine Hendrix is 53. Political commentator Ana Navarro is 52. Talk show host Seth Meyers is 50. Actor Brendan Hines is 47. Actor Joe Manganiello is 47. Actor Vanessa Ferlito is 46. R&B singer John Legend is 45. Rapper-musician-producer Terrace Martin is 45. Actor Andre Holland is 44. Actor Sienna Miller is 42. Actor Beau Garrett (TV: “The Good Doctor”) is 41. Actor Thomas Dekker is 36. Actor Mackenzie Rosman is 34. Pop singer David Archuleta is 33. Actor Mary-Charles Jones (TV: “Kevin Can Wait”) is 22. Actor Miles Brown is 19.

Got a story or photos to share?

Connecting is a daily newsletter published Monday through Friday that reaches more than 1,800 retired and former Associated Press employees, present-day employees, and news industry and journalism school colleagues. It began in 2013. 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 Central Region 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.

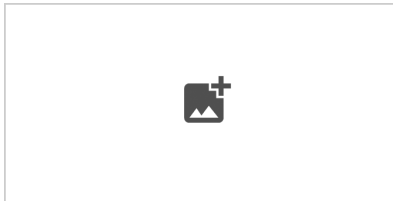
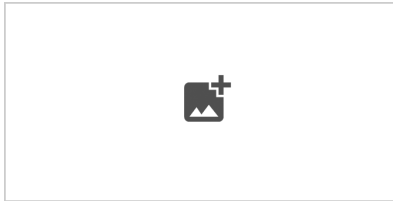
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

Paul Stevens

Editor, Connecting newsletter

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