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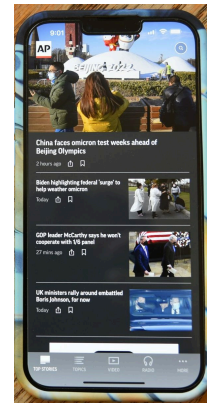
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Connecting

Feb. 22, 2024

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning on this Feb. 22, 2024,

Our lead story involves one of the hottest topics in journalism - AI and how it can best be used by news organizations.

The Associated Press announced Wednesday it will expand its coverage of artificial intelligence and bring training to global newsrooms on how to cover AI across every beat. Funding for the program will come from the Omidyar Network and the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation.

The leader of an Associated Press investigative team that won a Pulitzer Prize has died.

Robert Port, who died last Saturday, Feb. 17, in Lansing, Mich., directed the AP effort that earned the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting for the No Gun Ri massacre probe that exposed a mass killing of civilians by US troops during the Korean War. He was 68.

We bring you the wire story on his death.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: From the Overseas Press Club of America - Book Night: 'Newshawks In Berlin – The Associated Press And Nazi Germany'. DATE: 13 March 2024. TIME: 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time. LOCATION: Online via Zoom. Click [here](#) for more information.

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

Paul

AP to launch AI training program, coverage expansion with 2 new grants

Press Release | The Associated Press

The Associated Press will expand its coverage of artificial intelligence and bring training to global newsrooms on how to cover AI across every beat with funding from the Omidyar Network and the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation.

The two grants will supercharge the global news organization's ability to produce impactful investigations on the technology and add to the understanding of AI by both newsrooms and the public.

"Artificial intelligence technology is not only changing rapidly, but it's increasingly part of every coverage area," said Ron Nixon, AP vice president and head of investigations, enterprise, grants and partnerships. "It's crucial that news organizations large and small understand how to cover AI and its far-reaching impact. With this philanthropic support, we are looking forward to sharing our learnings with as many newsrooms as possible, while also bolstering AP's own coverage of AI."

In its reporting, AP will examine the power and influence of generative AI and algorithmic technologies through a series of deeply reported, narrative multi-format investigations.

Read more [here](#).

Robert Port, who led AP investigative team that won Pulitzer for No Gun Ri massacre probe, dies



FILE – The Associated Press’, from left, Investigative Researcher Randy Herschaft, Special Assignment Editor J. Robert Port and Seoul newsman Sang-hun Choe pose at Columbia University for the Pulitzer Prize luncheon, May 22, 2000, in New York. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — J. Robert Port, who led The Associated Press investigative team when it won a Pulitzer for the Korean War No Gun Ri massacre probe, has died at age 68.

Port died Saturday in Lansing, Michigan, according to his sister, Susan Deller. He had been treated for cancer for more than seven years by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Hired by The Associated Press in 1995 as special assignment editor, Port led the Pulitzer Prize-winning No Gun Ri reporting that exposed a mass killing of civilians by US troops during the Korean War.

The killings happened when U.S. and South Korean troops were being driven south by North Korean invaders, and northern infiltrators were reportedly disguising themselves as South Korean refugees.

On July 26, 1950, outside the South Korean village of No Gun Ri, civilians ordered south by U.S. troops were stopped by a battalion of the U.S. 7th Cavalry Regiment, and then attacked by U.S. warplanes. Survivors who fled under a



railroad bridge were then fired on by 7th Cavalry troops for several days. Korean witnesses estimated 100 were killed in the air attack and 300 under the bridge, mostly women and children.

In the 1990s, petitions were filed by Korean survivors to U.S. authorities, demanding an investigation, an apology and compensation.

The petitions were not acted upon until, in 1999, The AP reported it had confirmed the mass killing, having found 7th Cavalry veterans who corroborated the accounts of Korean survivors. The AP also uncovered declassified files showing U.S. commanders at the time ordered units to shoot civilians in the war zone.

In 2001, the Army acknowledged the No Gun Ri killings but assigned no blame, calling it a "deeply regrettable accompaniment to a war." President Bill Clinton issued a statement of regret, but no apology or compensation was offered.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Martha Mendoza.

Your stories of jury service

Hal Bock - I was called for jury duty on Long Island and when I was asked my occupation I confessed to being a sportswriter. Bad idea.

I had a friend who when seated on an airplane next to a chatty person said he sold dental instruments. End of conversation.

Anyway, my jury was seated and as part of the preliminary proceedings, the two lawyers asked for a sidebar (not the journalistic type) The three men huddled and then called me up to join them.

I thought, what have I done wrong. But I always was good at following directions so I left the jury box and went up to the judge and the lawyers, a little nervous.

"Mr. Bock," the judge said, "What did you think of Michael Jordan scoring 55 against the Knicks last night?"

-0-

Margaret Lillard - When I was on the General Desk in the '90s, I was called for jury duty in 1994. Some of you may recall a big trial that was going on that year in a state on the other coast ... When my cohort got into the courtroom, the defense counsel said that, for the duration, they'd ask us to avoid watching, reading, listening to any coverage of the O.J. Simpson trial. I think I may have been one of the few people in national media who did not think this was the trial of the century, so I'd asked Pete Brown and other dayside editors to give me anything, everything else to edit if at all possible. Still, there was no avoiding it, and I told the lawyer that. They didn't excuse me from the pool, but the guy would not look at me at all. I think the prosecutor felt bad, because she expressly made eye contact with me while addressing pool

members. This was the highlight (+/-) of two jury summonses while I was in New York, because at least I made it out of the waiting room.

-0-

Mark Mittlestadt - I received seven or eight jury summons during my career but based on my assigned pool number and the court's needs usually avoided having to go to the courthouse. I never had to serve although having covered the courts I always thought it would be an interesting exercise.

I twice had to report to Mercer County Court in Trenton, N.J. The first time a court clerk doing initial screening dismissed me when I explained I worked for The Associated Press and was getting ready for an election. The second summons was in the 1990s and I was knee-deep preparing for another election. I was sent to a small courtroom with a dozen other individuals seeking dismissal. The judge called us each to the stand, swore us to tell the truth and asked why we couldn't serve. I was surprised at a couple excuses that worked: pre-paid golfing vacation with co-workers to Florida; family reunion.

When I told him I was the AP chief of bureau for New Jersey and was busy building the database and programming vote-counting terminals for the election he replied "Thank you for your service. You're fulfilling your civic duty. You're dismissed."

-0-

Sheila Norman-Culp - For 14 years I lived in New Jersey's Essex County, which includes the city of Newark. There I acquired a perfect batting average — summoned for jury duty four times and selected every time.

I could not believe it — I thought no lawyers in their right mind would want an AP journalist on their jury.

Afterwards I asked why I was chosen. One lawyer said there was a very small pool of white women in Essex County who had childcare, didn't have relatives in the police force AND didn't know anyone who had been carjacked. (That was a thing in the 1990s). Another said "You're not media, you're AP" — which I took as a backhand compliment to our nonpartisan news coverage.

It turns out the defense lawyers were right to pick me. I voted not to convict every time — (one murder case, one rape case, two fraud cases) — simply because any AP journalist could see the Holland Tunnel-sized holes in the evidence the prosecution presented. It was an eye-opening, somewhat frightening glimpse into our court system.

-0-

Doug Pizac — *repeating Wednesday item to correct* - Back in the late '80s I was pegged for jury duty by the Los Angeles County court system in the eastern section. I asked one of my AP colleagues if they have ever been on a jury and what did they do. One told me when asked if you could view the defendant as innocent until proven guilty he

said to reply "If he was innocent, he wouldn't have been arrested" which would do to get him excused. I didn't do that.

Instead, I was upfront and said I was with AP thinking that would boot me in itself. Wrong; I was selected. One or two years later I was pegged again for duty and said the same thing and was selected again. This time though the prosecutor was the same one from my first trial. Afterwards, I asked him why he would want me on the jury what with my job involves. His reply caught me off guard. He said I was chosen because he knew my journalism background would let me see through all the bullshit thrown around by both sides.

And I agreed with him. I did see the BS. In the first trial he won. In the second he lost.

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Paul Stevens – My one and only call for jury service came in the final month of my Associated Press career, in 2009 after I had elected to take the company buyout and conclude 36 years of AP service. A parting gift, I guess.

I got a jury summons to appear in federal district court in Kansas City, Kan., and was asked in voir dire what my profession was. I said I worked for The Associated Press and when asked, said I was not directly involved in news coverage. I was selected - for a jury that was called to try the case of a young man accused of distributing child pornography across state lines. I've seen nothing worse, then or now, than what was depicted in the photographs distributed to each juror to view. The prosecution distributed at least a dozen such photos. Like my fellow jurors, I took one glance and looked away. And away. And away.

Our verdict was Guilty – and it was then that the judge sentenced the defendant to a mandatory prison term of five years with no parole. We were then asked after delivering the verdict if the defense and prosecuting attorneys could interview us in the jury room before we were dismissed. Both asked what was the deciding evidence and what they could have done better. Two points were conveyed: the prosecution submitted far too many of the pornographic photos for us to view, to the point of overkill, and we never were told that there was a mandatory five-year sentence for the crime. Several jurors (not me) thought that sentence was too severe for a first offense and indicated if they had known that, they might not have voted to convict.

A note to Connecting colleagues with a Thank You

Norm Abelson - One day, some time ago, I came upon three style books dating from my AP days back in the '50s and '60s. Thinking they should be preserved, I mailed them to AP's archives in New York. Soon I received a thank you note, also advising me my name had been given to an online newsletter called Connecting.

So, for several years now, fortuitously and by chance, I have been a Connector. Over that time, reading Paul Stevens's unique creation five days each week has brought a

ton of pleasure, knowledge, recollection, kinship – and some damn good writing - my way.

It also generously has provided me a canvas upon which to sketch out my opinions, remembrances and beliefs – both in and out of journalism – that I can share with people whom I have come to respect and trust. Especially meaningful have been the many kind and moving responses I have received. In such difficult times, these are no small things.

My Mom taught me that when a wonderful gift comes one's way, a timely thank you is appropriate. Now, as my 93rd birthday approaches, I feel the time is right. So I say, simply and gratefully, to Ye Olde Editor and the 1,800-plus members of a sterling association:

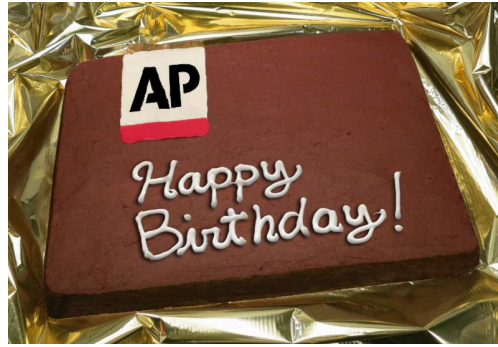
Thank you for the pleasure and privilege of being one among you,

A Sign of the Times...



Shared by Dan Juric.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Dorothy Abernathy](#)

[Barbara Woike](#)

Stories of interest

It's an election year, and Biden's team is signaling a more aggressive posture toward the press ^(AP)

By DAVID BAUDER

NEW YORK (AP) — Occupants of the White House have grumbled over news coverage practically since the place was built. Now it's Joe Biden's turn: With a reelection campaign underway, there are signs that those behind the president are starting to more aggressively and publicly challenge how he is portrayed.

Within the past two weeks, an administration aide sent an unusual letter to the White House Correspondents' Association complaining about coverage of a special counsel's report on Biden's handling of classified documents. In addition, the president's campaign objected to its perception that negative stories about Biden's age got more attention than remarks by Donald Trump about the NATO alliance.

It's not quite "enemy of the people" territory. But it is noticeable.

"It is a strategy," said Frank Sesno, a professor at George Washington University and former CNN Washington bureau chief. "It does several things at once. It makes the press a foil, which is a popular pattern for politicians of all stripes."

It can also distract voters from bad news. And while some newsrooms quickly dismiss the criticism, he says, others may pause and think twice about what they write.

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

-0-

'Bob was a newspaper man': Former Galesburg Register-Mail editor left an enduring legacy (WGIL)

By: Jay Redfern

A former longtime Register-Mail newspaper editor described as a consummate newsman is being remembered for his impact on local journalism, as well as making the National Stearman Fly-In a signature event for Galesburg.

Robert F. "Bob" Harrison—who worked at The Register-Mail for 38 years, including 27 presiding over the newsroom as editor in chief—died Monday in Ankeny, Iowa. Family says the cause of death was a result of complications from RSV. He was 83.

Harrison also served as a reporter and a photographer during a Register-Mail career that touched five decades from 1963 until he retired in May 2001.

"Bob was a good journalist and a good judge of talent," said Don Cooper, The Register-Mail publisher from 1990 to 2008. "He directed the newspaper's coverage and recruited and helped train a generation of reporters.

"We took turns writing the newspaper's editorials for several years. I always appreciated the insight and background that he brought to local issues.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Don Cooper, who said: "Bob Harrison, a good friend and a good newsman, died this week. Please share with the Connecting group. Members who worked in Illinois will remember Bob. He was active in the Illinois APME."

-0-

Opinion Local media is struggling. Government subsidies would make it worse. (Washington Post)

By George F. Will

It is an axiom and an accusation: Journalists consider the phrase "good news" an oxymoron. There is a short slide from "We don't report the planes that land safely" to a generally jaundiced view of things, which makes consuming journalism akin to eating spinach — virtuous, but more a duty than a delight.

Technology — radio, then television, then satellites, the internet and social media — has vastly expanded the menu of choices of news sources. Simultaneously, some journalistic practices, including the conflation of everything with politics, have forfeited the public's trust in, and appetite for, journalism.

A steady stream of bad economic news about the newspaper business has elicited some supposedly ameliorative ideas. Many, however, illustrate another axiom: Some improvements can make matters worse.

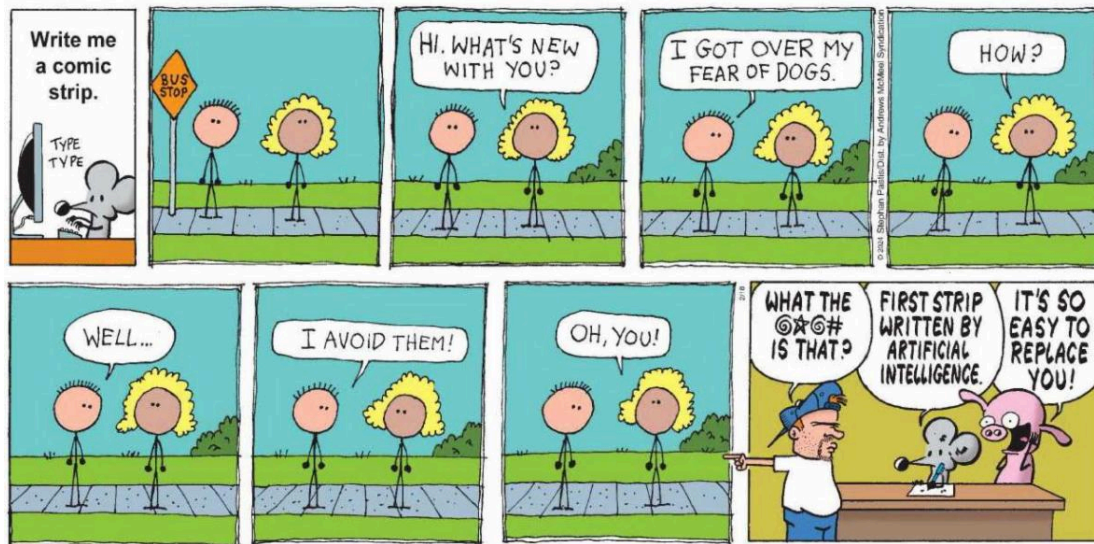
Time, Newsweek and Sports Illustrated are shadows of their former selves; “cord cutting” and streaming are transforming television news. Most stunning, however, is the collapse of the newspaper culture. The annual report from Northwestern’s Medill School of Journalism says:

Read more [here](#). Shared by Jim Limbach.

The Final Word

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

BY STEPHAN PASTIS



Shared by Adolphe Bernotas, Sonya Zalubowski.

Today in History - Feb. 22, 2024



Today is Thursday, Feb. 22, the 53rd day of 2024. There are 313 days left in the year.

Today's highlight

On Feb. 22, 1980, the "Miracle on Ice" took place in Lake Placid, New York, as the United States Olympic hockey team upset the Soviets, 4-3. (The U.S. team went on to

win the gold medal.)

On this date

In 1630, English colonists in the Massachusetts Bay Colony first sampled popcorn brought to them by a Native American named Quadequina for their Thanksgiving celebration.

In 1732, the first president of the United States, George Washington, was born in Westmoreland County in the Virginia Colony.

In 1784, a U.S. merchant ship, the Empress of China, left New York for the Far East to trade goods with China.

In 1935, it became illegal for airplanes to fly over the White House.

In 1959, the inaugural Daytona 500 race was held; although Johnny Beauchamp was initially declared the winner, the victory was later awarded to Lee Petty.

In 1967, more than 25,000 U.S. and South Vietnamese troops launched Operation Junction City, aimed at smashing a Vietcong stronghold near the Cambodian border. (Although the communists were driven out, they later returned.)

In 1987, pop artist Andy Warhol died at a New York City hospital at age 58.

In 1997, scientists in Scotland announced they had succeeded in cloning an adult mammal, producing a lamb named "Dolly." (Dolly, however, was later put down after a short life marred by premature aging and disease.)

In 2010, Najibullah Zazi, accused of buying beauty supplies to make bombs for an attack on New York City subways, pleaded guilty to charges including conspiring to use weapons of mass destruction. (Zazi faced up to life in prison but spent nearly a decade after his arrest helping the U.S. identify and prosecute terrorists; he was given a 10-year sentence followed by supervised release.)

In 2016, the City Council of Charlotte, North Carolina, voted 7-4 to pass a new law allowing transgender people to choose public bathrooms that corresponded to their gender identity.

In 2017, the Trump administration lifted federal guidelines that said transgender students should be allowed to use public school bathrooms and locker rooms matching their chosen gender identity.

In 2020, Bernie Sanders scored a resounding win in Nevada's presidential caucuses, cementing his status as the Democrats' front-runner.

In 2021, the number of U.S. deaths from COVID-19 topped 500,000, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Today's birthdays: Actor Paul Dooley is 96. Actor James Hong is 95. Actor John Ashton is 76. Actor Miou-Miou is 74. Actor Julie Walters is 74. Basketball Hall of Famer Julius

Erving is 74. Actor Ellen Greene is 73. Former Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., is 72. Former White House adviser David Axelrod is 69. Actor Kyle MacLachlan is 65. World Golf Hall of Famer Vijay Singh is 61. Actor-comedian Rachel Dratch is 58. Actor Paul Lieberstein is 57. Actor Jeri Ryan is 56. Actor Thomas Jane is 55. TV host Clinton Kelly is 55. Actor Tamara Mello is 54. Actor-singer Lea Salonga is 53. Actor Jose Solano is 53. International Tennis Hall of Famer Michael Chang is 52. Rock musician Scott Phillips is 51. Singer James Blunt is 50. Actor Drew Barrymore is 49. Actor Liza Huber is 49. Rock singer Tom Higgenson (Plain White T's) is 45. Rock musician Joe Hottinger (Halestorm) is 42. Actor Zach Roerig is 39.

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.

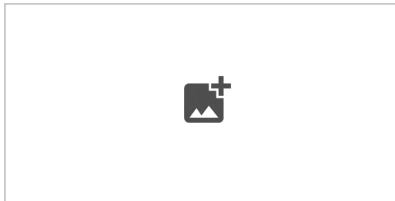
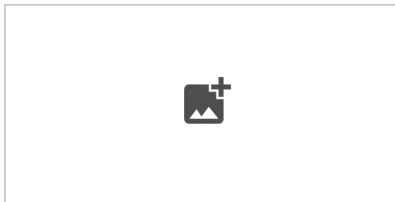
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

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

Paul Stevens

Editor, Connecting newsletter

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