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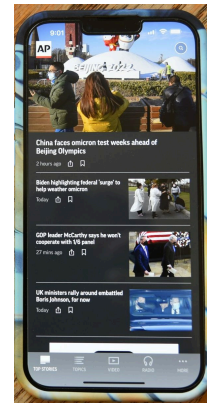
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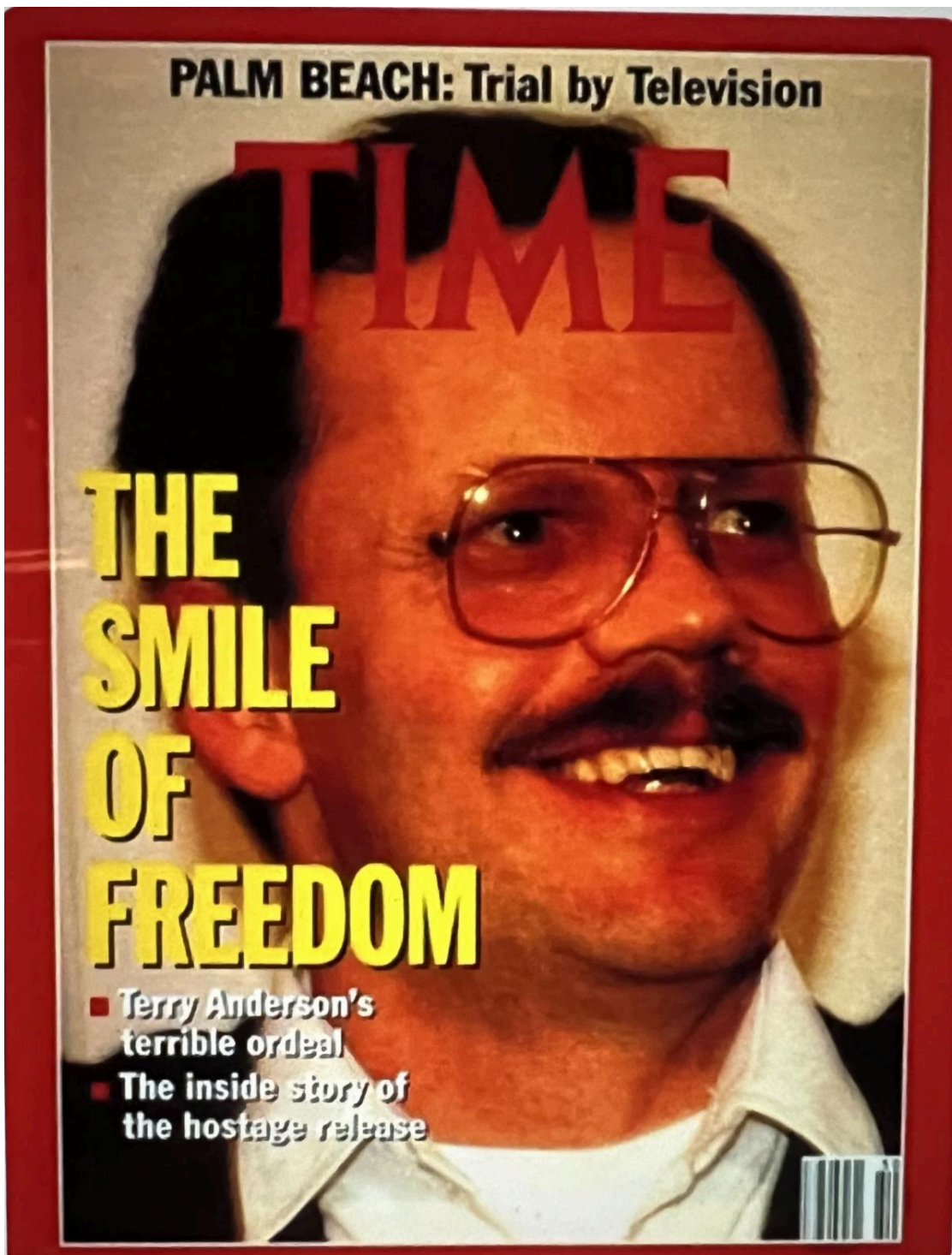
March 13, 2024

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning on this March 13, 2024,

"The man who gave me my freedom back, among many other remarkable accomplishments, has passed."

Those words came from our colleague [Terry Anderson](#) on the death of United Nations envoy Giandomenico Picco, who helped end the Iran-Iraq war and won hostage releases – including that of Anderson, the AP's chief Middle East correspondent when

he was abducted on March 16, 1985, by a group of Hezbollah Shiite militants and held hostage for nearly seven years.

Terry added, "Gianni was probably the most brilliant man it was my pleasure and delight to know - incredibly brave, gentle and gracious. A life worth praise."

We lead with the AP story on Picco's death.

AN OSCAR FOR JOURNALISM: Raney Aronson-Rath, FRONTLINE Editor-in-Chief & Executive Producer, to the FRONTLINE community – "I'm writing this message as I travel home from Los Angeles in the wake of 20 Days in Mariupol's Oscar win — the first-ever for both FRONTLINE and our partner on the documentary, The Associated Press.

"20 Days is a chronicle of journalists risking their lives to document the atrocities and share the reality of the Ukraine war with the world.

"It is my hope that this high-profile recognition of 20 Days marks a new era of appreciation and support for the type of vetted, fact-based journalism that is on display in the film — and that will be more crucial than ever as this election year unfolds and conflicts rage in Ukraine, Gaza and around the world."

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

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

Paul

UN envoy Giandomenico Picco, who helped end the Iran-Iraq war and won hostage releases, has died



FILE - United Nations mediator Giandomenico Picco, center, accompanies Terry Anderson, chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press, during a news conference at the Syrian Foreign Ministry in Damascus, Dec. 4, 1991. At left is American Ambassador Christopher Ross. Picco, whose negotiating skills helped resolve some of the thorniest crises of the 1980s and 1990s, including the Iran-Iraq war and the kidnappings of Westerners by Hezbollah in Lebanon, died Sunday, March 10, 2024. (AP Photo/Mohammad Ali, file)

BY MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN
The Associated Press

Former U.N. diplomat Giandomenico Picco, whose negotiating skills helped resolve some of the thorniest crises of the 1980s and 1990s, including the Iran-Iraq war and the kidnappings of Westerners by Hezbollah in Lebanon, has died.

Picco passed away peacefully Sunday after a long illness, his son, Giacomo Picco, said. He was 75.

Picco worked at the United Nations from 1973 until 1992. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar of Peru, the fifth secretary-general of the world body, appointed him to his executive office in 1982, and he eventually became assistant secretary-general for political affairs.

Picco represented Pérez de Cuéllar in negotiations between New Zealand and France after the Greenpeace flagship Rainbow Warrior was sunk by French secret agents in 1985. At the time of its sinking, the vessel was protesting French nuclear tests in the Pacific.

The following year, he became the chief U.N. official in charge of negotiating the truce in the war between Sunni-majority Iraq and Shiite-majority Iran. More than 1 million

people were killed in the conflict that began when Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein invaded his neighbor in 1980 and featured trench warfare, waves of attacks by Iranians and chemical weapons assaults by Iraq.

Picco also played a role in Afghanistan, helping facilitate the 1989 withdrawal of Soviet forces after Moscow's 1979 invasion of that country.

Picco's understanding of and relations with Iran allowed him to negotiate the release of hostages kidnapped by groups with ties to the Islamic Republic, including Terry Anderson, the bureau chief in Beirut for The Associated Press, who was held the longest — from 1985 to 1991.

The mission was not without risk. In 1987, Anglican church envoy Terry Waite disappeared from Beirut while trying to win the release of the hostages and was held captive himself — also until 1991.

As Pérez de Cuéllar's special envoy, Picco faced that risk with personal bravery and an understanding of diplomacy and the Middle East.

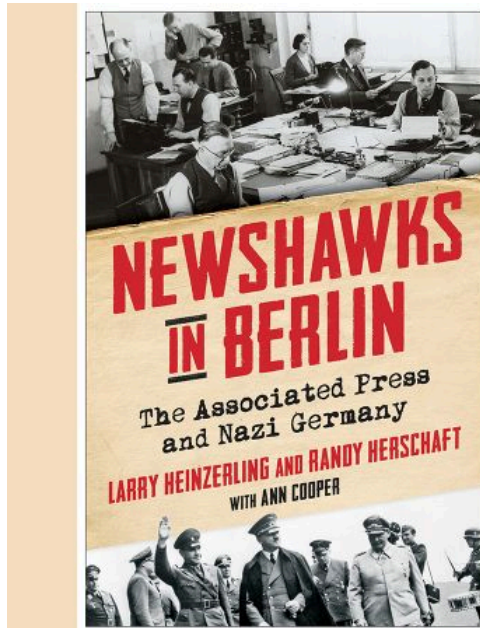
"When asked for the difference in my approach to securing the release of the hostages to that of Terry Waite, I responded, 'He went to Beirut from the West and I went to Beirut from the East.' In those days, the East began in Teheran," Picco wrote in his 1999 biography, "Man without a Gun: One Diplomat's Secret Struggle to Free the Hostages, Fight Terrorism, and End a War."

Read more [here](#).



Terry Anderson with Associated Press President and CEO Lou Boccardi in December 1991. (AP Photo)

Tonight, Overseas Press Club hosts book night for 'Newshawks in Berlin'



**OPC BOOK NIGHT:
"NEWSHAWKS IN BERLIN —
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
AND NAZI GERMANY"**

**RANDY HERSCHAFT & ANN COOPER
WITH ANDREW NAGORSKI**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13
6:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME
VIA ZOOM
RSVP: [BIT.LY/NEWSHAWKS_OP](https://bit.ly/newshawks_opc)C**

Overseas Press Club news release

On March 13, join the OPC for a book night about 'Newshawks in Berlin,' by Larry Heinzerling and Randy Herschaft, with Ann Cooper, which reveals how The Associated Press covered Nazi Germany from its earliest days through the aftermath of World War II.

The event begins at 6 p.m. Eastern and will be available through Zoom. You can RSVP [here](#).

Heinzerling and Herschaft accessed previously classified government documents; plumbed diary entries, letters, and memos; and reviewed thousands of published stories and photos to examine what the AP reported and what it left out. Their research uncovers fierce internal debates about how to report in a dictatorship, and it reveals decisions by AP that sometimes prioritized business ambitions over journalistic ethics. The book also documents the AP's coverage of the Holocaust and its unveiling.

Larry Heinzerling (1945–2021) was a reporter, foreign correspondent, and news executive during a forty-one-year career at The Associated Press. He worked in foreign bureaus in Nigeria, South Africa, and Germany and served as director of AP World Services and deputy international editor.

Randy Herschaft has been an investigative journalist at the AP for three decades.

Ann Cooper, Heinzerling's wife, worked with Herschaft to complete the book following Heinzerling's death in 2021. She is professor emerita at the Columbia Journalism School, a former executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists, and former NPR bureau chief in Moscow and Johannesburg.

Moderating the discussion is Andrew Nagorski, a journalist and author who spent more than three decades as a foreign correspondent and editor for Newsweek, serving as bureau chief in Hong Kong, Moscow, Rome, Bonn, Warsaw, and Berlin.

Release date for Malcolm Browne biography is Friday

Ray Boomhower – The release date for my Browne biography is this Friday, March 15.

The Ultimate Protest: Malcolm W. Browne, Thich Quảng Đức, and the News Photograph That Stunned the World examines how the most unlikely of war correspondents, Malcolm W. Browne, became the only Western reporter to capture Buddhist monk Thich Quảng Đức's horrific self-immolation on June 11, 1963. Quảng Đức made his ultimate sacrifice to protest the perceived anti-Buddhist policies of the Catholic-dominated administration of South Vietnam's president Ngo Dinh Diem.

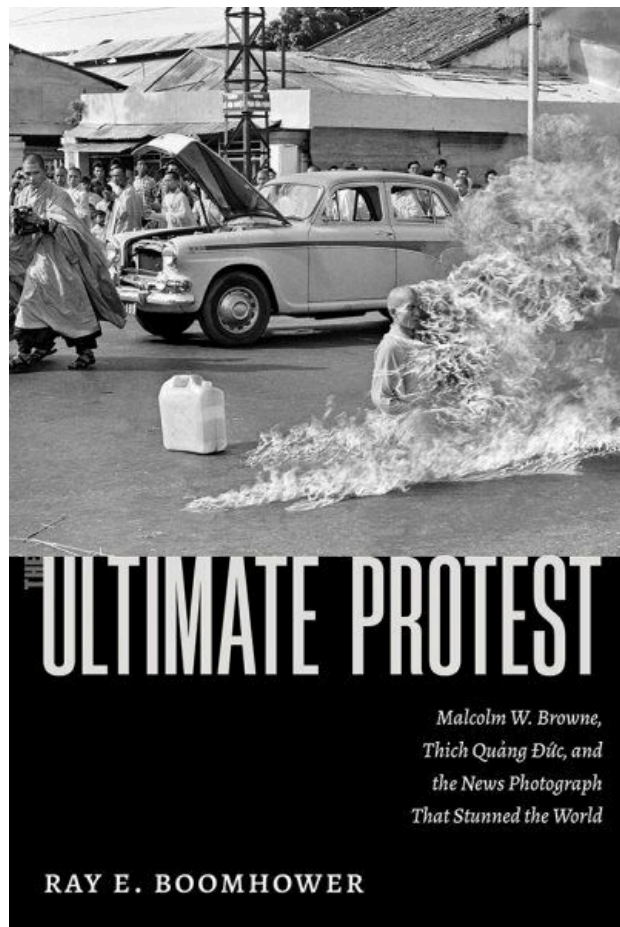
The book is available directly from its publisher, High Road Press, an imprint of the University of New Mexico Press, [here](#).

The book is also available such online retailers as Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Bookshop.org.

If people are lucky enough to be in Indiana, I have several book signings lined up. They are:

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 30, Tomorrow Bookstore, 882 Massachusetts Avenue, Indianapolis.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 13, Three Sisters Books & Gifts, 7 Public Square, Shelbyville, Indiana



6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, April 26, Morgenstern Books, 849 Auto Mall Road, Bloomington, Indiana

3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 27, Basile History Market, Indiana History Center, 450 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis

Here's also some background on how I came to write the book:

While finishing the final chapters for my biography of World War II correspondent Richard Tregaskis, published in 2021, I wrote about the uncharitable opinion the veteran reporter held for the younger journalists reporting on the early days of America's involvement in the Vietnam conflict, who often clashed with U.S. officials there. Tregaskis went as far as to tell David Halberstam of the New York Times, "If I were doing what you are doing, I'd be ashamed of myself."

Tregaskis, in a review he wrote for the Chicago Tribune panning Halberstam's 1965 book *The Making of a Quagmire*, had a higher opinion of the work of another reporter in Vietnam--the Associated Press's Saigon bureau chief, Malcolm W. Browne. This brief mention of Browne and his work intrigued me, and I vowed to learn more about his career.

I was surprised to learn that Browne, who shared the 1964 Pulitzer Prize for international reporting with Halberstam, was also the person responsible for capturing one of the iconic images of the Vietnam war, the self-immolation in June 1963 of a Buddhist monk, Thich Quang Duc, protesting the policies of Ngo Dinh Diem's South Vietnamese government. I decided to investigate Browne's life. The result is the publication of my nineteenth book, *The Ultimate Protest: Malcolm W. Browne, Thich Quang Duc, and the News Photograph That Stunned the World*.

Courtney Bonnell named national security and foreign policy editor

By Nicole Meir

In a memo to staff on Tuesday, Washington Bureau Chief Anna Johnson and Deputy Washington Bureau Chief Michael Tackett announced that Courtney Bonnell will join AP's team in Washington as the new national security and foreign policy editor.

Here is their memo to staff:

We know many of you have worked with Courtney over the years and know that in addition to being a stellar editor she also is a champion of collaboration. In her current role in London as the Europe, Middle East and Africa business editor, Courtney consistently brings journalists together across teams, regions, formats and more to produce distinctive stories on everything from food insecurity issues exasperated by the war in Ukraine to how tensions in the Middle East and especially in the Red Sea are causing disruptions to fragile global supply chains.

Those collaboration skills will be key to her new role, where we aim to connect the dots between what happens in Washington with news and events around the world.

Before moving to London in 2021, Courtney was a supervisor in the West region in Phoenix where she was a go-to editor on top U.S. news stories including devastating wildfires, mass shootings, politics and elections. Courtney also was part of a global AP team that received the 2021 Dart Award for Excellence in Trauma Coverage for the extraordinary "Lives Lost" series, which told the stories of people around the world who died from COVID-19.



Prior to joining AP in 2013, Courtney was an editor at The Arizona Republic where she often also filled in as metro editor and front-page editor. She also worked at the Amarillo Globe-News in Texas and The Desert Sun in Palm Springs, California. Bonnell is a graduate of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism at Arizona State University.

Please join us in welcoming Courtney to our team and to Washington! She will start in Washington in mid-April.

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

Exclusive: AP launches e-commerce site with Taboola

Sara Fischer
Axios

The Associated Press is launching an e-commerce site called AP Buyline, powered by Taboola, executives told Axios.

Why it matters: It's part of a broader effort by the AP to diversify its business by adding more consumer revenue.

The company, which has historically made most of its money from licensing its content to other media organizations, redid its website last year to boost consumer traffic and advertising revenue.

What's next: The new shopping effort will launch March 18th, beginning with personal finance recommendations in categories such as credit cards, investments, insurance and retirement savings.

Additional shopping categories, such as home products, beauty, and fashion will launch in April.

How it works: The content, which includes product reviews, will be created by a team at Taboola that will work closely with the AP to adhere to its standards and editorial style.

At the AP, the initiative is being spearheaded by Drew Stoneman, who serves as vice president for consumer revenue.

Taboola's content team is managed by chief editor Will Kenton, a longtime personal finance editor.

Context: Taboola, which went public in 2021, has traditionally helped power native advertising for publishers on the open web, but it's more recently pushed to expand into e-commerce.

The firm acquired e-commerce platform Connexity in 2021 for \$800 million to power that effort.

Last year, the company launched a new business called Taboola Turnkey Commerce, which provides publishers with ready-to-use recommendations they can use to sell affiliate advertising.

Shortly after, it partnered with Time to launch a new site called "Time Stamped," which now has 3 million monthly users, Taboola said.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Peggy Walsh, Myron Belkind, Kazuo Abiko.

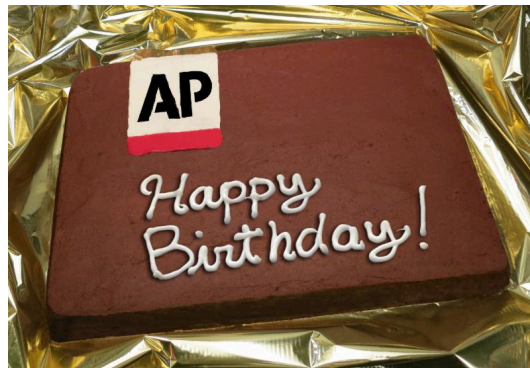
Click [here](#) for news release from Taboola Inc.

AP sighting



[Dave Zelio](#) - From Allenspark, Colorado.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Steve Hurst](#)

[Sandy Johnson](#)

[Estes Thompson](#)

[Nancy Trott](#)

Stories of interest

States have hodgepodge of cumbersome rules for enforcing sunshine laws (AP)

BY JOSH KELETY

PHOENIX (AP) — A nationwide review of procedures by The Associated Press and CNHI News revealed a patchwork of complicated systems for resolving open government disputes that often put the burden of enforcing transparency laws on private citizens.

The review, timed to Sunshine Week, found that fewer than a third of states have offices that can resolve residents' complaints by forcing agencies to turn over documents or comply with open meetings requirements.

In most states, the only meaningful option for residents to resolve complaints about agencies wrongfully withholding public records is to file costly lawsuits.

Here is a state-by-state breakdown of the mechanisms for resolving open government disputes across the U.S.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Myron Belkind.

-0-

Five of this year's Pulitzer finalists are AI-powered

(Nieman Lab)

By ALEX PERRY

Five of the 45 finalists in this year's Pulitzer Prizes for journalism disclosed using AI in the process of researching, reporting, or telling their submissions, according to Pulitzer Prize administrator Marjorie Miller.

It's the first time the awards, which received around 1,200 submissions this year, required entrants to disclose AI usage. The Pulitzer Board only added this requirement to the journalism category. (The list of finalists is not yet public. It will be announced, along with the winners, on May 8, 2024.)

Miller, who sits on the 18-person Pulitzer board, said the board started discussing AI policies early last year because of the rising popularity of generative AI and machine learning.

"AI tools at the time had an 'oh no, the devil is coming' reputation," she said, adding that the board was interested in learning about AI's capabilities as well as its dangers.

Last July — the same month OpenAI struck a deal with the Associated Press and a \$5 million partnership with the American Journalism Project — a Columbia Journalism School professor was giving the Pulitzer Board a crash course in AI with the help of a few other industry experts.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

Sprouts of Hope in a Gloomy Media Landscape (New York Times)

By Katie Robertson and Benjamin Mullin

This year is looking grim for the news business.

Facing a set of harsh financial realities — resulting from a mix of news fatigue, an unsteady advertising market and a precipitous fall in traffic from tech giants — many outlets have been forced to fold or make significant cuts in recent months.

But there are some signs of hope. A small cohort of for-profit digital media companies that sprang up during the pandemic have found success — at least for the moment — by taking the opposite approach of many predecessors, such as BuzzFeed and Vice, which fatefully relied on huge amounts of investor money to prioritize growth.

The new class of news start-ups — Puck, Punchbowl News, The Ankler and Semafor are among the most prominent — have kept spending down and hired carefully. They are all centered on newsletters covering specific niches with broad appeal. They have attracted top journalists by putting them at the heart of the enterprise, sometimes as part owners in the companies.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

A chain of radio stations is launching online newspapers in 18 (or more?) markets (Media Nation)

BY DAN KENNEDY

This one comes in via former WBZ Radio (AM 1030) news director Peter Casey, who's now a communications consultant and part of the team at the local startup Winchester News. Saga Communications, a Michigan-based company that owns radio stations in 27 secondary markets, is launching digital newspapers in 18 markets by the end of the second quarter, according to the website Inside Radio. Another story says that the outlets will be unveiled "across its entire footprint." Despite the lack of clarity, it sounds like Saga's eventual goal is to have an online newspaper anywhere it has radio stations.

Those stations include a number of New England markets: Brattleboro, Vermont; Greenfield, Northampton and Springfield, Massachusetts; Keene and Manchester, New Hampshire; and Portland, Maine. A quick scan of the stations shows that they mostly broadcast music, with formats including country, oldies and adult contemporary. I found a few news-and-talk stations in the mix as well, but they appear to be focused on local issues.

The stations will be based on a pilot that Saga is already publishing in Tennessee called Clarksville Now. A quick glance shows the site is newsy and community-oriented. Katie Gambill, who developed the site and who will be in charge of the rollout, is quoted as saying:

Read more [here](#).

Today in History - March 13, 2024



Today is Wednesday, March 13, the 74th day of 2024. There are 293 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history:

On March 13, 2013, Jorge Bergoglio of Argentina was elected pope, choosing the name Francis. He was the first pontiff from the Americas and the first from outside Europe in more than a millennium.

On this date:

In 1781, the seventh planet of the solar system, Uranus, was discovered by Sir William Herschel.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed a measure prohibiting Union military officers from returning fugitive slaves to their owners.

In 1925, the Tennessee General Assembly approved a bill prohibiting the teaching of the theory of evolution. (Gov. Austin Peay signed the measure on March 21; Tennessee repealed the law in 1967.)

In 1933, banks in the U.S. began to reopen after a “holiday” declared by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In 1938, famed attorney Clarence S. Darrow died in Chicago.

In 1943, financier and philanthropist J.P. Morgan Jr., 75, died in Boca Grande, Florida.

In 1946, U.S. Army Pfc. Sadao Munemori was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for sacrificing himself to save fellow soldiers from a grenade explosion in Seravezza, Italy; he was the only Japanese-American service member so recognized in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

In 1954, the Battle of Dien Bien Phu began during the First Indochina War as Viet Minh forces attacked French troops, who were defeated nearly two months later.

In 1995, two Americans working for U.S. defense contractors in Kuwait, David Daliberti and William Barloon, were seized by Iraq after they strayed across the border; sentenced to eight years in prison, both were freed later the same year.

In 1996, a gunman burst into an elementary school in Dunblane, Scotland, and opened fire, killing 16 children and one teacher before killing himself.

In 2011, the estimated death toll from Japan’s earthquake and tsunami climbed past 10,000 as authorities raced to combat the threat of multiple nuclear reactor meltdowns while hundreds of thousands of people struggled to find food and water.

In 2012, a ferry carrying more than 200 people collided with a cargo boat and sank just short of Dhaka, Bangladesh; most on board died.

In 2017, Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, once the world’s most-wanted fugitive known as “Carlos the Jackal,” appeared in a French court for a deadly 1974 attack on a Paris shopping arcade that killed two people. (He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison for the third time.)

In 2018, President Donald Trump abruptly dumped Secretary of State Rex Tillerson — via Twitter — and moved CIA Director Mike Pompeo from the role of America’s spy chief to its top diplomat.

In 2020, Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman, was fatally shot in her apartment in Louisville, Kentucky, during a botched raid by plainclothes narcotics detectives; no drugs were found, and the “no-knock” warrant used to enter by force was later found to be flawed.

In 2021, Marvelous Marvin Hagler, the middleweight boxing great whose title reign and career ended with a split-decision loss to “Sugar” Ray Leonard in 1987, died at age 66 at his New Hampshire home.

Today’s Birthdays: Jazz musician Roy Haynes is 99. Songwriter Mike Stoller is 91. Singer-songwriter Neil Sedaka is 85. R&B/gospel singer Candi Staton is 84. Opera singer Julia Migenes is 75. Actor William H. Macy is 74. Comedian Robin Duke is 70.

Actor Dana Delany is 68. Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., is 67. Rock musician Adam Clayton (U2) is 64. Jazz musician Terence Blanchard is 62. Actor Christopher Collet is 56. Rock musician Matt McDonough (Mudvayne) is 55. Actor Annabeth Gish is 53. Actor Tracy Wells is 53. Rapper-actor Common is 52. Rapper Khujo (Goodie Mob, The Lumberjacks) is 52. Singer Glenn Lewis is 49. Actor Noel Fisher is 40. Singers Natalie and Nicole Albino (Nina Sky) are 40. Actor Emile Hirsch is 39. U.S. Olympic gold medal skier Mikaela Shiffrin is 29. Tennis star Coco Gauff is 20.

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.

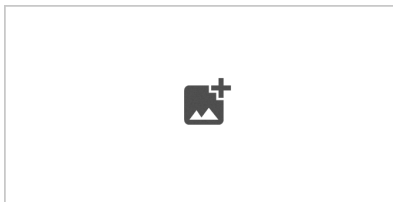
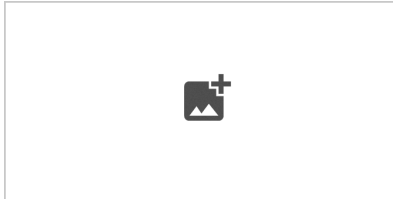
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

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

Paul Stevens

Editor, Connecting newsletter

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