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Connecting - April 26, 2018

1 message

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Connecting

April 26, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Thursday morning!

For your consideration:

SELF PUBLISHER? - Colleague **Eric Quinones** ([Email](#)) - poses this question: "I'm curious if any Connecting colleagues have experience with self-publishing books -- any key tips to keep in mind or pitfalls to avoid?" Got some advice to share? Send it on to Connecting.

CARS AND HORSES - Colleague **Bob Manning** ([Email](#)) notes regarding our call for Indianapolis 500 memories "that the month of May is not only a big deal in Indy, but also 100 miles south, here in Louisville, where the 144th running of the Kentucky Derby is 10 days away." If you have a favorite memory of covering the Derby, send it along. There's room for both!

Today's issue leads with a poignant memory from colleague **Repps Hudson** of 1968 - called by many the most significant year in our history - so Connecting's series on your memories of 1968 continues.

Repps served with the Army in Vietnam that year and as a platoon leader was wounded in a firefight - the day before Martin Luther King was assassinated. His story focuses on 1968, but in early 1969, after separating from the Army, he flew back to Vietnam to get married to a young woman he fell for during his tour at Lai Khe.

"Soon, we ran out of money. I asked around Saigon for a news job, though I knew nothing about reporting," he said. "I got on with the AP as an office boy and wrote stories under the watchful eyes of **George Esper**, **Ed White** and the bureau chief, **George McArthur**, who hired me. What an opportunity! Like none other. The best bureau in the AP's system, I think, and I got to learn from the reporters, editors and photographers who told the story of my war."

Finally, I hope you read The Final Word story by **John Schwartz** of **The New York Times**, a native Texan who keeps a bit of Texas with him... I am hoping his piece sparks a Connecting story idea among this group of traveling souls - many of us never landing back in our home state during our AP journey. I'm not sure what my wife **Linda** would have thought about bringing some Kansas wheat into the delivery room for our three kids...not a good time to ask, as she's recovering from knee replacement surgery Tuesday morning (hence early arrival of Connecting that day) and quite concerned that Ollie and me are her caregivers.

Have a good day!

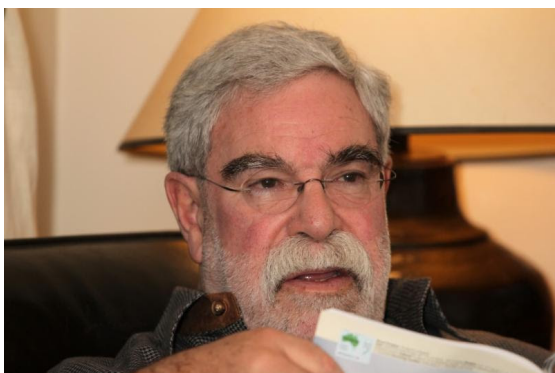
Paul



'I got through it a day at a time...'

Repps Hudson ([Email](#)) - Nineteen sixty-eight didn't seem particularly noteworthy at first, until later when we added up everything that had happened.

I got through it a day at a time, every day in the Army, first in Vietnam and then in Seattle, where I finished my commitment as a reserve advisor.



Looking back, I can see, as a professor in graduate school said during a seminar on Western political thought four years later, the world was on the brink of collapsing. Or so it seemed.

Jan. 31 brought the absolutely frightening, game-changing Tet Offensive up and down South Vietnam. I was a rifle platoon leader with the First Infantry Division. On Feb. 3,

we lost the only man killed in my platoon while I was with it, Manual T. Segura, a draftee from Santa Fe, N.M.

Even today, Segura is never far from my thoughts.

During January, all along Highway 13, an old French road that ran through our base camp at Lai Khe in Binh Duong province north to Cambodia, we noticed lots of

young Vietnamese men riding in twos on motorcycles south toward Saigon.

We didn't think anything of that, except in retrospect, I know they were probably Viet Cong heading to the capital of South Vietnam to try to overthrow the government we Americans were there to defend.

When the Tet Offensive, led by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army, exploded during that annual Lunar New Year ceasefire, with all its violence and attacks on American bases, Vietnamese cities and even the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, suddenly the pace of the war we had grown accustomed to came to an abrupt halt.

Nothing was the same after that.

I remember thinking that we could no longer count on getting hot meals flown in by helicopters to our forward defensive positions on Highway 13. We could no longer count on getting mail every day.

Both were hard on the moral of the men in my company, Delta Company of the 1st of the 16th.



The war ground on, through February. As I recall, *Stars and Stripes*, the Department of Defense weekly newspaper we got in the field, stopped running the list of those killed in action because hundreds of Americans were dying each week. To see the names of men we had trained with was demoralizing.

In March, I got to go on R and R (rest and recreation) to Hong Kong. We in Vietnam got a five-day vacation somewhere in Asia or Hawaii during our one-year tour.

I stayed at the President Hotel, talked on a clear line with my sister who lived in the Boston area and got fitted for a couple of suits at a tailor shop.

As soon as we checked into our rooms, we flushed toilets just for the fun and luxury of it. We had no such toilets in the field or base camp, of course.

For months, Hong Kong had been off limits to Americans because the Red Guards, stirred up by Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution, were rampaging through the streets of the British Crown Colony.

Here were Chinese people who spoke with a British accent. The cars drove on the other side of the streets. I was in awe of the splendor of Hong Kong. It would be hard to return to Lai Khe base camp, carved out of a French rubber plantation.

Despite military regulations, I bought and hid in my luggage a copy of the chairman's Little Red Book of Quotations. I still have it.

On April 3, I was back in the field as platoon leader. That was the day I got shot in a very scary firefight.



I can say from experience that an AK-47 or whatever weapon fired the round that hit me packs quite a wallop. The round that caught me in a grazing wound in the chest spun me around, knocked me down and got me out of the field for the rest of my tour. The impact of the bullet was like being smacked with a heavy mallet.

The next day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, though we didn't learn of his murder for a few days. Then, in June, Sen. Bobby Kennedy was killed in Los Angeles.

Nineteen sixty-eight was turning into a most disturbing year for me and the United States. So many deaths of Americans in the war, and two American leaders gunned down back in the states, followed by riots in the cities where many of us had come from.

How could we G.I.'s understand this sense of catastrophe back home and as well as in our own lives?

By late August, while executive officer in my company area in Lai Khe, I came down with severe chills. After a few days, I was medevacked to the sprawling field hospital in Long Binh.

Day after day, I had blood tests and many hours of bed rest. More than a week passed before I learned that, of all things - how embarrassing! - I had mononucleosis.

The men of Delta Company were out on patrol and facing Charlie, and I was lying in a clean hospital bed, watching the riots that engulfed the Democratic convention in Chicago on delayed broadcast black-and-white TV.

I read Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* for the second or third time. Several nurses and doctors wanted it after I was done. They were hungry for something interesting to read, an escape from the routine of a field hospital.

Soon I was short and then it was time to fly back to "the world," as we called the states.

When our DC-8 took off from Bien Hoa air base, we cheered. Most of us slept the whole way home. When we touched down at Travis Air Force Base outside of San Francisco, we cheered again.

How good and safe it felt to be back where Charlie couldn't kill us.

I flew home to Kansas City, met by my parents at the downtown airport where I had left the year before. My 77-year-old father and my 62-year-old mother welcomed me home.

I was in a state of shock and couldn't understand the changes that had occurred in me. That would take many years, I found out.

My parents told me about a new restaurant in Independence we should try. My first real meal back in the states was at a Pizza Hut. I don't remember what we had, but I do recall the pizza tasted like banquet food.

After my leave, I drove with my dad to Seattle in a new MGB-GT - British racing green - I bought with the \$3,500 cash I saved in Vietnam.

I was heading to Ft. Lawton, the Sixth Army Reserve Headquarters in northwest Seattle, where I was to become an advisor to two units made up of men who avoided being shipped to Vietnam by enlisting in the reserves.

With the presidential campaign under way that fall, Gov. George Wallace of Alabama came to town to speak at a rally at a hall too small to hold the crowd.

The newspapers reported that he spoke to a standing-room-only crowd. That was a neat trick, I later figured out: Better standing room only than empty seats, although Wallace seemed to have plenty of followers.

I voted for Richard Nixon that November because I was disgusted that the Democratic candidate, Vice President Hubert Humphrey, had cried somewhere during the campaign.

My Vietnam experience made me want someone tough to be president of my United States. Four years later, George McGovern got my vote. Then nearly two years later, Nixon resigned in disgrace.

That year also made me much more interested in politics, history and the state of global affairs. The term for those days, I think, was that I had become "politically aware."

It has taken years and lots of reflection to understand just how correct my professor was when he commented in my seminar on Western political thought that 1968 saw the world on the brink of one disaster after another.

By the way, many years later, news reports datelined Washington stated that he and his wife had been arrested for spying for Cuba. They had been at it in the State Department for 30 years.

They told the sentencing judge they had no regrets. In 2010, my former professor was sentenced to life in prison, his wife 81 months.

Fidel Castro complimented them for telling U.S. secrets "to protect the Cuban people from the terrorist plans and assassination plots organized by various U.S. administrations."

(Repps Hudson spent most of four decades in newspapers in Missouri, 12 years at the Kansas City Star and 22 at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, as well as Washington, D.C. He was reared on a farm in Carroll County, Mo., and graduated from the University of Missouri-Kansas City with a degree in history and political science five years after his class because he spent three years in the Army. He earned a

master's of international affairs from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Since retiring from the Post-Dispatch in 2007, he teaches journalism and international affairs in St. Louis, where he lives with his wife, Stacey. They have three children. He likes to read, write and cook interesting meals for his family.)

Move to New York? Politely declined. But Omaha? Yes, and never regretted it...

John Willis ([Email](#)) - I got a kick out of the recent Connecting stories about our colleagues' moves to the NYC, and it reminded me that I politely declined an invite to the NY Broadcast Desk.

I was working at KMCD-AM, Fairfield, Iowa, in the early '70s. I was encouraged by station management to be an active contributor to the AP in Des Moines, where Gavin Scott was chief of bureau. I was so cooperative that some staffers suggested I take the tests for possible employment.

I think it was a Saturday in December 1972, when I drove to Des Moines. I can't remember if COB Scott was in that morning to administer the examination. A staffer may have supervised. It took a couple of hours. I drove home, not knowing what to think.

I was told the test would be graded and that if I did well I would be put on a list of eligible job candidates.

I continued sharing stories, but as the weeks turned to months, I pretty much figured The AP was a long shot. Most of my experience was in broadcast. In the interim feelers came from radio stations in Waterloo and Burlington.

I think it was April 1973 when my wife, Connie, answered the phone one afternoon at our apartment.

"It was The AP in New York," she gushed, when I got home that afternoon. "They want you to call as soon as possible."

I returned the call, and was told there would soon be an opening on the national broadcast desk in New York City; would I consider taking the job?

Would I??

I was told that I was on the latest roster of potential new AP hires. I would be responsible for relocation expenses. I was told the roster was circulated nationally, and there might be other openings.

Having graduated from high school in south Jersey (Moorestown) and having lived in the northern part of the state while in grade school, I was really excited about the prospects. I don't remember asking about the pay or any of the important stuff like that.

Connie was taken aback. A native Iowan, Fairfield was only 25 miles down the road from Ottumwa, where we met in 1969 and were married in 1970. Her folks lived there, as did her sisters. She could drive over for a visit in 30 minutes. A move to New York City was terrifying to her. I tried to ease her concerns by telling her we could find a place to live in New Jersey and I could commute by train.

She needed more convincing and wanted to think about it.

The next day I got a call from COB Scott, who told me there was about to be an opening in the Omaha bureau, and wondered if I might be interested.

Would I???

Holy smokes, I was a wanted man, and who could turn down The AP?

Omaha correspondent Ed Nicholls called to follow up. He told me the job was basically handling the Nebraska week day broadcast desk from noon until. Many times that "until" was 2 am.

I would also be asked to write newspaper copy and would cover local and statewide stories. The pay was second- or third year scale (I can't remember) based on my experience, but it amounted to about \$200 weekly. There were shift differentials, overtime pay, medical benefits and paid vacation, too.

I was making about \$135 a week at KMCD. I worked six days a week and was on call the seventh; 50 to 60-hour work weeks were normal. No pension. No paid medical plan. Going to work for The AP was like hitting the lottery for us.

Omaha sounded great to my wife. I had never been there, but her uncle Don, an Episcopalian priest who presided at our wedding three years earlier, had lived there for about 20 years. She had visited Omaha many times.

The cost of moving to Omaha, about 175 miles away, would be much less than trying to move to NYC. Nicholls said I would get varied assignments in Omaha, whereas in New York I would be doing the same thing every day. The cost of living and commuting would also be lower, Nicholls noted.

Instead of New York City we went to Omaha, and I have never regretted the decision. Our daughter was born in Omaha and baptized by uncle Don. My wife finished her undergraduate degree at The University of Nebraska at Omaha. Three of the best years of our lives were spent in Omaha.

It wasn't as glamorous as NYC and Nebraska weather can be frightful, but it was the right move for us. I got a chance to cover news, sports, weather, politics and just about anything else of interest, and learned about The AP's cooperative spirit from the ground up.

An evacuation drill at AP Headquarters



Susan Clark ([Email](#)) snapped this photo of AP President Gary Pruitt and AP staff during an evacuation drill Tuesday of the building that houses AP corporate headquarters in New York. Her photo at the Rector Street Park shows, from left: Barry Bronstein, corporate counsel; Gary Pruitt; Claudeth Haylett, paralegal; Christine Campion, executive assistant, and Julissa Santos, legal assistant.

Stories of interest

A Playful Headline. Confusion Ensues. An Editor Explains. (New York Times)

By PHILIP B. CORBETT

The Reader Center is one way we in the newsroom are trying to connect with you, by highlighting your perspectives and experiences and offering insight into how we work.

A headline about Wells Fargo on our home page on Thursday, and in the print paper Friday, got an unusual amount of attention from readers - and not just because they have strong views on the bank.

The home page headline, with James Stewart's column about the big fines imposed on the bank, framed the topic like this:

Are Fines Just Deserts, or Beating a Dead Horse?

(The print headline had a similar theme: Just Deserts, or Just Cruel?)

Scores of readers, not to mention a few colleagues, contacted us urgently to point out the embarrassing typo: We meant "desserts," right? Not "deserts"?

Well, actually, no. We had it right. But perhaps we should have anticipated the confusion.

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

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Gaza officials say journalist shot by Israel dies of wounds

By FARES AKRAM

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) - A Palestinian journalist who was shot by Israeli troops while covering a demonstration on the Gaza-Israel border earlier this month died of his wounds on Wednesday, the Gaza Health Ministry announced.

With the death, Ahmed Abu Hussein became the second journalist to be fatally shot during weeks of Palestinian border protests.

Abu Hussein, 24, was wounded in the abdomen on April 13 at a protest near Jebaliya, in the northern Gaza Strip. He was later transferred to a Palestinian hospital in the West Bank, and then to an Israeli hospital, where he died Wednesday.

Photos and amateur video from the scene show him far from the border and wearing a blue jacket and helmet marked "TV" when he was shot. The video shows him in a group of bystanders located some 50 meters (yards) behind a wall of burning tires that had been set on fire by demonstrators.

Read more [here](#).

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Who's who in local news: A guide to the biggest brains and bank accounts in the fight for local journalism (Nieman)

By CHRISTINE SCHMIDT

There really isn't another word than "local" for what local news does (no, hyperlocal doesn't count). Local news' strength and mere presence has been threatened in the roiling journalism industry - but a number of initiatives are stepping up to help fill the void.

In the past few years, local journalism - especially the traditional models of TV news and newspapers - has struggled to adapt to the challenges of digital advertising and platforms, as national-level organizations have greater scale to soak up subscription dollars and chase heavy-hitting stories. It's not a new tale, but as the media landscape (and the Facebook landscape, the political landscape, the news group ownership landscape, etc.) continues to shift and everyone remembers the importance of quality local news to democracy, there are a number of rising initiatives focused on (and with funding for) local news. There's also a solid group of organizations that have already been working on amplifying local news voices. But the network of brains and bank accounts dedicated to local news can get confusing.

Read more [here](#).

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'You never see that point of view in mainstream press.' (New York Times)

By **DAVID LEONHART**

The Trump presidency has sparked a debate about which voices are - and aren't - reflected in the national media. Many publications have been criticized for publishing too narrow a range of opinions. And several publications, including The Times, The Atlantic and The Washington Post, have recently made high-profile conservative hires.

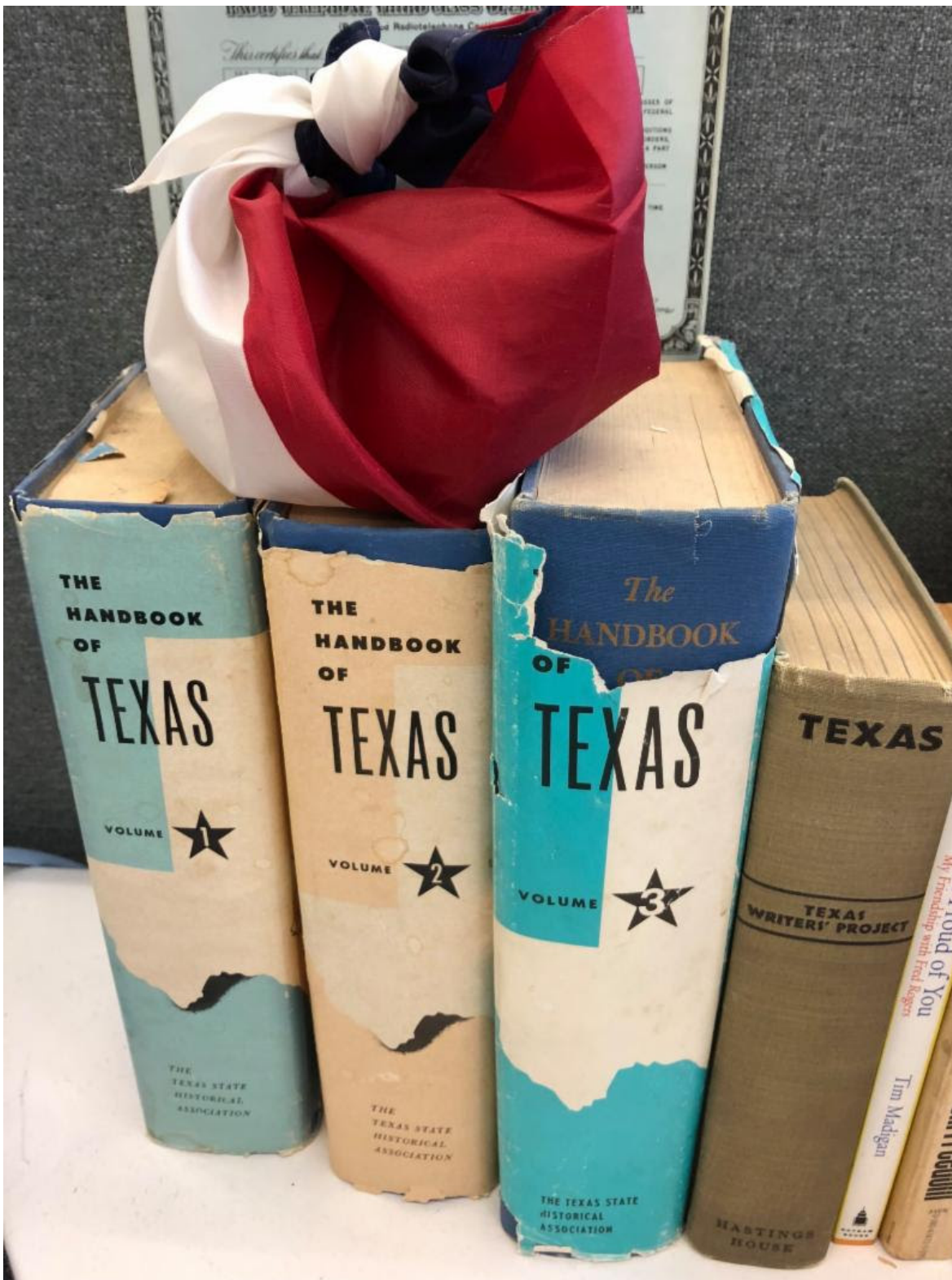
I recently asked Times readers for their thoughts on the issue: Which opinions are underrepresented in the national media? And which if any should remain underrepresented because they're beyond the pale of productive discourse?

We have received almost 1,000 responses, via email and social media. Here, we describe some common themes from those replies:

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

The Final Word

How a Bag of Texas Dirt Became a Times Tradition (New York Times)



By John Schwartz

The New York Times

I wanted my child to be born in Texas, as my wife and I had been. But we were living in New York. What to do?



Despite the frequent characterization of people who work at The New York Times as Northeastern elites, we come from all over the nation, and the world. We are shaped by our diverse life experiences and have a natural pride in our origins. And some of us want to pass that heritage on to our kids, which is how a humble bag of dirt became a newsroom resource.

If you know Texans, you know that our pride might be a bit bigger, like everything from the Lone Star State. (Supposedly, anyway. I'm only 5 feet 3 inches tall, and that's when I'm wearing my boots.)

When my wife, Jeanne, was pregnant with our first child, in 1987, we couldn't fly to Texas for the delivery, but I did come up with a plan: Get some dirt to put under the delivery table. It might sound like a nutty idea, but it wasn't a new one. I first heard of it during a study abroad program in Siena, Italy, in the 1970s.

Read more [here](#).

Today in History - April 26, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, April 26, the 116th day of 2018. There are 249 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 26, 1937, German and Italian warplanes raided the Basque town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War; estimates of the number of people killed vary from the hundreds to the thousands.

On this date:

In 1564, William Shakespeare was baptized at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon, England.

In 1607, English colonists went ashore at present-day Cape Henry, Virginia, on an expedition to establish the first permanent English settlement in the Western Hemisphere.

In 1777, during the American Revolutionary War, 16-year-old Sybil Ludington, the daughter of a militia commander in Dutchess County, New York, rode her horse into the night to alert her father's men of the approach of British regular troops.

In 1865, John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Abraham Lincoln, was surrounded by federal troops near Port Royal, Virginia, and killed.

In 1913, Mary Phagan, a 13-year-old worker at a Georgia pencil factory, was strangled; Leo Frank, the factory superintendent, was convicted of her murder and sentenced to death. (Frank's death sentence was commuted, but he was lynched by an anti-Semitic mob in 1915.)

In 1923, Britain's Prince Albert, Duke of York (the future King George VI), married Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon at Westminster Abbey.

In 1945, Marshal Henri Philippe Petain (an-REE' fee-LEEP' pay-TAN'), the head of France's Vichy government during World War II, was arrested.

In 1952, the destroyer-minesweeper USS Hobson sank in the central Atlantic after colliding with the aircraft carrier USS Wasp with the loss of 176 crew members.

In 1968, the United States exploded beneath the Nevada desert a 1.3 megaton nuclear device called "Boxcar."

In 1977, the legendary nightclub Studio 54 had its opening night in New York.

In 1986, an explosion and fire at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine caused radioactive fallout to begin spewing into the atmosphere. (Dozens of people were killed in the immediate aftermath of the disaster while the long-term death toll from radiation poisoning is believed to number in the thousands.)

In 1994, voting began in South Africa's first all-race elections, resulting in victory for the African National Congress and the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as president. China Airlines Flight 140, a Taiwanese Airbus A-300, crashed while landing in Nagoya, Japan, killing 264 people (there were seven survivors).

Ten years ago: Police in Amstetten, Austria, arrested Josef Fritzl, freeing his daughter Elisabeth and her six surviving children whom he had fathered while holding her captive in a basement cell for 24 years. (Fritzl was later sentenced to life in a psychiatric ward.) Yossi Harel, the ship commander whose attempt to bring Holocaust survivors to Palestine aboard the Exodus 1947 built support for Israel's founding, died in Tel Aviv at age 90. Avant-garde composer Henry Brant died in Santa Barbara, California, at age 94.

Five years ago: Unable to ignore air travelers' anger, Congress overwhelmingly approved legislation to allow the Federal Aviation Administration to withdraw furloughs of air traffic controllers caused by budget-wide cuts known as the sequester, ending a week of coast-to-coast flight delays. Fire at a psychiatric hospital near Moscow killed 38 people; only three escaped. Country singer George Jones, 81, died in Nashville.

One year ago: Dismissing concerns about ballooning federal deficits, President Donald Trump proposed dramatic tax cuts for U.S. businesses and individuals. President Trump told the leaders of Mexico and Canada that he would not immediately pull out of the North American Free Trade Agreement, just hours after administration officials said he was considering a draft executive order to do just that. NASA's Cassini spacecraft survived an unprecedented trip between Saturn and its rings, sending back amazing pictures to show for it. Jonathan Demme (DEM'-mee), the Oscar-winning director of "The Silence of the Lambs" and "Philadelphia," died in New York at age 73.

Today's Birthdays: Architect I.M. Pei is 101. Movie composer Francis Lai is 86. Actress-comedian Carol Burnett is 85. Rhythm-and-blues singer Maurice Williams is 80. Songwriter-musician Duane Eddy is 80. Singer Bobby Rydell is 76. Rock musician Gary Wright is 75. Actress Nancy Lenehan is 65. Actor Giancarlo Esposito is 60. Rock musician Roger Taylor (Duran Duran) is 58. Actress Joan Chen is 57. Rock musician Chris Mars is 57. Actor-singer Michael Damian is 56. Actor Jet Li (lee) is 55. Rock musician Jimmy Stafford (Train) is 54. Actor-comedian Kevin James is 53. Record company executive Jeff Huskins is 52. Former U.S. Poet Laureate Natasha Trethewey (TREHTH'-eh-way) is 52. Actress Marianne Jean-Baptiste is 51. Country musician Joe Caverlee (Yankee Grey) is 50. Rapper T-Boz (TLC) is 48. First lady Melania Trump is 48. Actress Shondrella Avery is 47. Country musician Jay DeMarcus (Rascal Flatts) is 47. Country musician Michael Jeffers (Pinmonkey) is 46. Rock musician Jose Pasillas (Incubus) is 42. Actor Jason Earles is 41. Actor Leonard Earl Howze is 41. Actor Tom Welling is 41. Actor Pablo Schreiber is 40. Actor Nyambi Nyambi is 39. Actress Jordana Brewster is 38. Actress Stana Katic is 38. Actress Marnette Patterson is 38. Actor Channing Tatum is 38. Americana/roots singer-songwriter Lilly Hiatt is 34. Actress Emily Wickersham is 34. Actor Aaron Weeks is 32. Electro pop musician James Sunderland (Frenship) is 31.

Thought for Today: "A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices." - William James, American philosopher and psychologist (1842-1910).

Got a story or photos to share?

Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.
- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.
- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.



- **"A silly mistake that you make"**- a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.

- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.

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

- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.

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

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