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Connecting -- May 29, 2018

1 message

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Tue, May 29, 2018 at 9:08 AM

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Connecting

May 29, 2018

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning!

Colleague **Ruth Gersh** was mentioned In Connecting's birthdays greetings section for Sunday, May 27.

She was scheduled for this week's Connecting Q-and-A profile - normally moving on Monday but delayed a day due to the Memorial Day holiday - so Ye Olde Connecting Editor asked her about the timing and she responded that May 27 was a milestone birthday - "what I'm calling my half-price Metrocard birthday."

"Go ahead and mention it all you want," she added. "Or you will start me on my rant about women being coy about their ages only exacerbates devaluation of ... etc. etc. 65, which is when you can get a half-price Metrocard for the MTA. (New Jersey transit gives you half price at 62)."

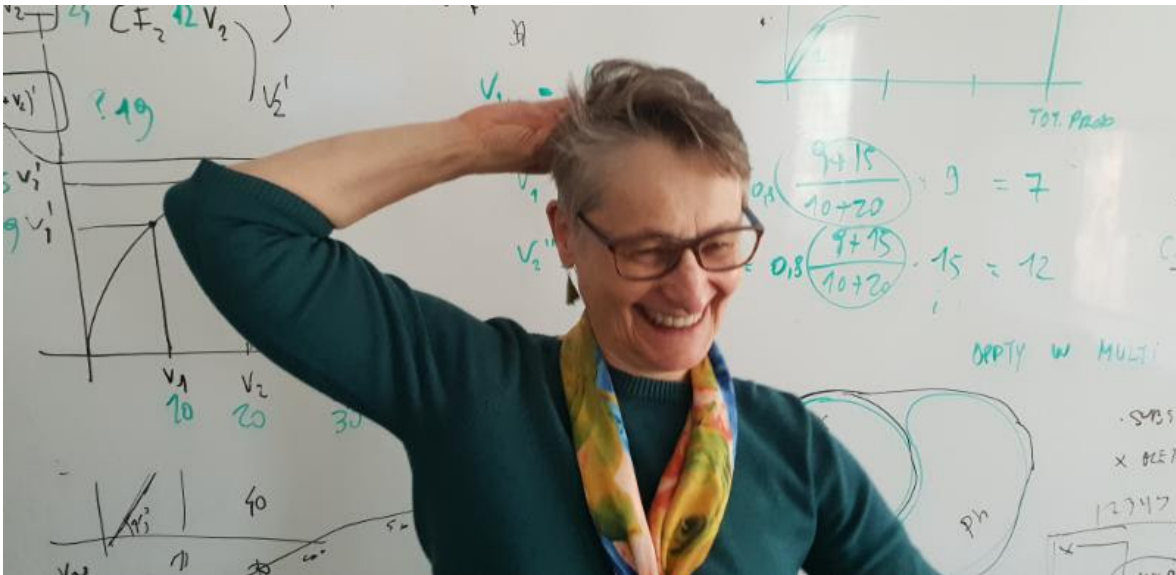
I knew it would be a great interview, and it was.

Have a good day! I look forward to your Connecting contributions.

Paul

Connecting Q-and-A

Ruth Gersh



What are you doing these days?

40 years in, I still walk into an AP office every working day. And then some. On my 12th job, fifth city, third NY headquarters building, fourth AP president. About average. For fun and definitely not for profit, I do occasional theater work, backstage variety.

How did you get your first job with the AP? Who hired you? What were your first days like?

I had been laid off from a temporary job with the feature department of the (Norfolk) Virginian Pilot. The AP was the first organization to call with a job offer before I ran out of money. It just beat out the Springfield, Mass., paper. I lucked out there. Bob Gallimore, the COB in Richmond, was the one who took a chance on me in 1978 despite barely meeting the experience requirements. I spent the first six months walking to and from work because I refused to buy a car until I had passed probation.

What were your different past jobs in the AP, in order? Describe briefly what you did with each?

I started with the usual night broadcast stint in Richmond. During my first six months, a U.S. Senate candidate died in a plane crash; a Coast Guard training vessel sank and an Amtrak train derailed. All on my shift.

I moved in 1980 to the one-person Norfolk correspondency, from which I covered the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. I was all I could be. My evaluation, under Appearance (that was a thing back then), noted: "Wears slacks a lot." I still do.

I returned to Richmond in 1982 to cover the statehouse and politics. That stint included the inauguration of the AP election system, tested - successfully! -- during Virginia's 1985 statewide elections. It also included the infamous "tuxedo rental" incident.



The story (which I thought everyone had heard at least twice - all comments paraphrased):

1984. Southern Governor's Conference in Williamsburg, Va. Black tie dinner.

Me to COB: Can I buy a dress and charge it to the AP?

COB: No. Who ever heard of such a thing?

Me: Can I buy a dress and amortize it every time I wear it for work?

COB: No. Who ever heard of such a thing?

Me: If my colleague George went, would you pay for him to rent a tuxedo?

COB: Of course.

I rented a tuxedo.

I stayed there for four years until my Bronx-born-and-bred mother, during a visit, mistook a statue of Robert E Lee for Ulysses S. Grant.

I was quickly dispatched as news editor to Louisville where, my first day on the job, the Bingham's sold the Louisville newspapers to Gannett. Also where I got to work for the Ed Staats, who I will always remember as not only a great news mentor but as one of the most decent human beings I've known.

Preparing to take up residence in Des Moines as bureau chief in May 1988, I was told the winters were harsh but the summers bearable. I arrived at the start of the worst drought in 50 years. Highlight of that deployment? When the cleaning crew mistakenly threw out the cardboard box with all the tapes from South Dakota's broadcast contest and the COB and her stalwart office manager dumpster dove to retrieve them.

In late 1992, I refinanced my house, picked up a new company car, found new partner for my amateur ballroom dancing career. So of course I was immediately transferred to New York. (Well, AP President Lou Boccardi "asked" me if I "wanted" to move to New York and become his assistant. I did. Thanks, Lou!)

Q: What does an assistant to the president do?

A: Whatever the president tells her to.

In late 1995, Jim Kennedy, Mark Berns and I started what became the nucleus of AP's online / Web / digital operations. The Board had told the AP to "go do something on the Internet." And with the launch of our first digital B2B2C product, The Wire, so we did.

And so I did until 2003, when the new CEO, Tom Curley, folded what had been the stand-alone digital operations into the broader AP. I took a deep gulp and left the news side of the AP. Since then I've had a number of increasingly vague titles, which have resolved to being the mechanic of the products department, making sure things get to where they're supposed to be and occasionally dealing in higher math. I specialize in retiring old internal systems to make way for the new. Mostly because I'm one of the few people left who remember how we did something, why we did it that way and what PHIST stands for.

Who played the most significant role in your career and how?

I won't give you a "most". My AP career has been graced with too many colleagues who have taught, nurtured, supported, shared and made it possible to still be proud to say "I work for The Associated Press." And I don't care how sappy that sounds.

Would you do it all over again- or what would you change?

Absolutely. Nothing against Springfield, Mass., but I'm glad the AP called first. The only thing I'd change would be to put a "DO NOT THROW OUT" sign on that box of South Dakota contest entries.

What's your favorite hobby or activity

I am an avid knitter, weekend hiker and crossword puzzle addict. I also sew, quilt and spin - as in yarn, not the exercise. So far I have resisted getting a loom. But my work with a non-profit children's theater company, as production stage manager, is closest to my heart. We put on an original musical production every year, in the British Panto tradition and give away the tickets to underserved communities, We're coming up on our 15th year and for some of our audience, we are their Radio City or Nutcracker.

What's the best vacation trip you've ever made?

I usually think the last one I took is the best. Call me fickle. For now, let's call it a hiking trip in Wales.

Names of your family members and what they do?

If you count the cats, Turk and Gilly eat, nap and chase imaginary mice. My brother John is a semi-retired Senior Principal Cognitive Engineer at Johns Hopkins Applied Physical Laboratory. What exactly that means is a whole other article. My sister-in-law Alice is an entirely retired HR executive who shares my love of knitting and other crafts. And of course my grand-niece Elodie is the most incredible 3-year-old ever.



As a New Yorker, Yankees or Mets?

Yankees, which I claim to have come to honestly. My first baseball game ever was at old-Yankee stadium; just my father and me out for a special day. My allegiance was cemented.

Ruth Gersh's email - rgersh@ap.org

Connecting mailbox

Dan Neary, former AP Montpelier correspondent and key figure in history of Wire Service Guild, dies at 77

Adolphe Bernotas ([Email](#)) - Dan Neary, my friend, colleague and a key figure in the history of the Wire Service Guild (now News Media Guild), the AP Montpelier correspondent in the late 1960s, has died at age of 77.

[Click here](#) for his obituary. Here are my thoughts.

Dan loved and lived the AP. He settled in atop Horn of the Moon, a hill in East Montpelier, with his wife and twin daughters. The Neary's and I would cross-country ski in the winter from their front or back door, swim in their pond in the summer and enjoy the bounty of their garden in the fall.

Life was good in Montpelier, until Dan's AP career began to evaporate when he got into trouble, snared in a skirmish between competing member newspapers; AP thought it would



solve such headaches the way it often dealt with those annoying problems -- transfer him to another bureau. AP since changed some of its personnel practices, with the union's help, but this was a half-century ago when "quality of life" was not in AP's paternalistic vocabulary. Dan refused to leave Vermont for New York and the company fired him. During a break in one of many hearings challenging the dismissal, an AP vice president told me, "He must be nuts refusing a transfer to New York."

The union's fight against such forced transfers would become one of the longest arbitrations in American labor history. The fight took its toll on Dan, Emily and the twins and ended with a settlement. While Dan lost the fight to remain an AP writer, future AP staffers won -- The Neary arbitration led to a milestone union contract victory against forced transfers.

Dan continued to write and publish his work and photographs. But the last time I saw him in East Montpelier there was a sadness in him as we recalled our days at AP.

The News Media Guild learned that Dan left the union \$1,000 in his will.

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Did bishop tell 'crows' to love your neighbor?

Larry Blasko ([Email](#)) - In a note to the Washington Post corrections desk;

You might want to rethink --and reread -- this photo caption from May 25:

Bishop Michael Curry takes his message to the White House

Bishop Michael Curry led a church service in Washington on May 24, followed by a candlelight march to the White House. Curry told the crows to "love your neighbor."

May 25, 2018 | 1:53 AM EDT

As the Bishop might say, "He who lives by Spellcheck shall die by Spellcheck." Or might wind up referring to members of a black bishop's audience as "crows."

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One of these 'Wills' was the real Indy winner

Harry Atkins ([Email](#)) - Will Power winning this year's Indy 500 reminds me of another Will -- Will Overhead -- who was credited for the victory in 1933 on the front page of the Walsenburg (Colo.) World Independent. It was a case of an inexperienced wire editor not understanding AP jargon.

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Listening to radio one stormy night

John Willis ([Email](#)) - One of the vivid memories of my childhood is listening to my radio one stormy night in Johnstown, PA. It was the spring of 1959 and I was not yet a teenager. That would come about six months later.

We lived in the Westmont section of Johnstown, atop a mountain, overlooking the steel mill city that was infamously flooded, twice.

The Pirates were in Milwaukee.

Harvey Haddix, "the Kitten," was on the hill for the Buccos, and Lew Burdette toed the slab for the Braves, according to Pirate play by play man Bob Prince.

[This link](#) tells the story of that night I will never forget...

Haddix was born 9/18/35 in Medway, OH. Medway, which is just east of Dayton about six or seven miles.

Haddix pitched for the Pirates, Reds, Cards, Os and the Phillies, compiling a lifetime record of 136-113. Not overwhelming, but a good pitcher, and the little guy who threw the best game ever, even to this day...and lost.

It should be noted that Haddix got two World Series rings. He was the pitcher of record (on in relief) when Billy Mazaroski hit the homer over the left field wall at Forbes Field to give the Pirates a 10-9 victory and the 1960 title over the Yankees. It's still the only game seven, ninth inning walkoff homer in World Series history, October 13, 1960. Haddix was also the winner in game five that year.



He got another ring as the Chuck Tanner's pitching coach with the Pirates when they knocked off the O's in 1979 (We Are Family)...by then I was working for The Associated Press, based in Houston, TX.

Haddix died 1/8/94 in Springfield, Oh, of emphysema. something the old scribe is very familiar with, having smoked even longer than Haddix did.

Beal (blinner)
Don Herz: without question - single
no base strike
Beal Bryan
Walt O'Brien
Mike
Big On Day
John Kelly
Beal Bryan

Dick Jordan
Roman Major
Joe C. Christopher
Don
Rocky Nelson
Wes Deter
Dick Stewart
Danny Huntington
Brody Burgess

PITCHER		IN	ER	H	SO	BB
HADDIX		12	0	1	8	1

SPONSORS		DOUBLE PLAYS	
P-I-T		P-I-T	

OPPONENTS		P-I-T	
W.P. BURDETTE (3-2)		P-I-T	
L.P. HADDIX (2-3)		P-I-T	

TEAMS		TOTALS	
MILWAUKEE		P-I-T	
PITTSBURGH		MILWAUKEE	

POS.	MILWAUKEE	AVE.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	HR	RBI	
1	MANTHAN	125																			
	O'BRIEN	206	6-3			SO ₂			5-3		29	8							14		
2	MATHOUS	270	34			8 ⁺			SO ₅		29	8							14	31	
3	AARON	453	8			A			5-3		30	5-3							13	44	
4	ADCOCK	305		SO ₁			5-3		22	SO ₂	31	6-3							4	36	
5	COVINGTON	302		4-3		7 ⁺			23	7	32	8 ⁺							2	18	
6	CRAWFORD	310		5-3		7			21	5-3	33	8 ⁺							6	18	
7	PAPKO	267			9		3		25	SO ₅	20	1-3							0	2	
8	LOGAN	332			6 ⁺		8-3		24	7	35	8							5	15	
9	BURDETTE					SO ₂		SO ₄		27	SO ₃	36	5-3								
W 7		L 2																			

W	L	R	H	C	L	B

HOME RUN VOID - AS
AARON STOPPED BETWEEN BASES - ADCOCK PASSED RUNNER

It was 59 years ago this Saturday night that I was glued to my radio, listening as I laid in bed. Thunderstorms rumbled through our area that night making the giant maple trees that surrounded our house swing and sway in the heavy winds.....lightning punctuated the sky and caused the radio signal to crackle on and off.....inning by inning they played scoreless ball. The Pirates, featuring Roberto

Clemente, Dick Groat, Don Hoak and Maz, hit Burdette pretty well, but couldn't buy a run. The Braves, who had Eddie Mathews and Hank Aaron, amongst other sluggers, got nothing until the very end.....

Here is a photocopy of a scorecard for the Braves that night (above). I believe it was kept by Prince in the booth, as you can see his handwritten notes, and in the end it was autographed by every Pirate player and coach.....I can recognize the handwriting. That's how big a Pirate fan I was in 1959. Seems like it was just yesterday.



AP offers rare glimpse into world of China's political indoctrination camps



Omir Bekali cries as he details the psychological stress endured while in a Chinese internment camp, during an interview in Almaty, Kazakhstan, March 29, 2018. Since 2016, Chinese authorities in the heavily Muslim region of Xinjiang have ensnared tens, possibly

hundreds of thousands of Muslim Chinese, and even foreign citizens, in mass internment camps. The program aims to rewire detainees' thinking and reshape their identities.

Chinese officials say ideological changes are needed to fight Islamic extremism. AP PHOTO

/ NG HAN GUAN

Last year, when Beijing correspondent Gerry Shih was working on a series of stories about the Uighurs in China, he learned that a number of citizens from Kazakhstan had been ensnared in a crackdown in the Xinjiang region where Muslims were being indoctrinated in a network of internment camps.

When one of them, Omir Bekali, decided to speak out about his eight-month ordeal in detention and in a so-called re-education center where hundreds of thousands of Muslims are being indoctrinated to disavow their religion, Shih, video journalist Dake Kang and China chief photographer Ng Han Guan traveled 2,000 miles to Almaty to interview him.

Their in-depth, all-formats report on the physical and psychological torment Bekali endured earns the Beat of the Week.

When Bekali was first contacted by Shih in January, he was concerned about talking, fearing Chinese government retribution against his family back in China. But when his family was taken away in March, he decided to go ahead and tell his story.

Shih compiled other accounts to corroborate Bekali's account of detention and internment. He was able to track down a few other former detainees as well as a former instructor in one of the camps - a crucial and rare find who helped provide details on how the detainees were organized and what kind of behavior was likely to place them under greater scrutiny.

Shih worked closely with China bureau chief Gillian Wong on the story, which was complemented by compelling photos and video.

During the AP team's visit to Kazakhstan, a Central Asian country where Chinese security and intelligence agents are active, a man believed to be a Chinese agent stopped Kang and Ng while they were filming at the central mosque and called the police. The two were detained for three hours. They were released after police confirmed their identity as AP reporters.

Many of the activists and camp survivors approached for interviews demanded to see the passports and IDs of the AP staff - Chinese-speaking reporters of East Asian descent - since suspicion and paranoia are very strong in these circles of people hiding from the Chinese government. That added to the reporting difficulty.

The AP's reporting was widely praised, including by the competition:

This is only the second time that I share a story by our competition. Kudos to our friendly rival @gerryshih for giving us a window into life inside the re-education camps in Xinjiang <https://t.co/cHvuzJteWa>

- Laurent Thomet 卢鸿 (@LThometAFP) May 17, 2018

Stuart Leavenworth, a McClatchy national correspondent, called the story a "must-read" while the New York Times' investigative reporter Mike Forsythe called it "essential reading on the massive Xinjiang crackdown." Jessica Meyers, Asia correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, said it was "another impressively reported piece by @gerryshih." Academics and human rights activists similarly praised the reporting as "outstanding," "stunning," "stellar" and "excellent."

The Washington Post cited AP's reporting in an editorial and NPR's All Things Considered interviewed Shih:

For this riveting all-formats package about life inside China's re-education camps, Shih, Kang and Ng share this week's Beat of the Week award.

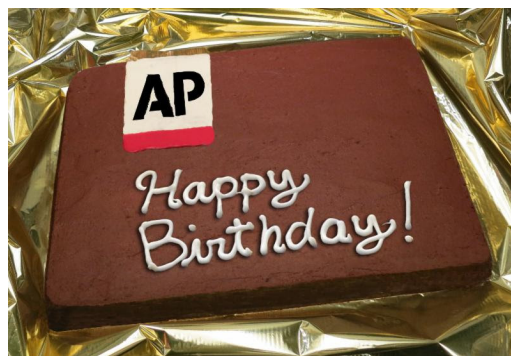
Bekali walked out of XJ in Dec (past those huge shopping malls at Khorgos border FTZ funded by Chinese money) with a single piece of paper with handwritten Chinese saying he was released. No compensation no apology. He's back in Almaty driving taxis and scared out of his mind.

AP Photo of the Day



Josh Holt is draped in an American flag by his grandmother Linda Holt as he returned to Salt Lake City on May 28. He was freed this weekend after being held in a Venezuelan jail for nearly two years. | Kim Raff/AP Photo

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



to

Bryan Brumley - bebrumley@yahoo.com

Arnold Garson - ahgarson@gmail.com

Stories of interest

TV anchor, photojournalist killed when tree falls on vehicle



TRYON, N.C. (AP) - A TV news anchor and a photojournalist were killed Monday when a tree fell on their vehicle in North Carolina as they reported on flooding and severe weather associated with Subtropical Storm Alberto, the television station said.

WYFF-TV Anchor Mike McCormick and photojournalist Aaron Smeltzer both worked in the Greenville, South Carolina, market for more than a decade, anchor Carol Goldsmith said on air, breaking the news.

"Mike and Aaron were beloved members of our team - our family," Goldsmith said.

The men were driving on U.S. Highway 176 near Tryon when the large tree fell on their vehicle, North Carolina Highway Patrol Master Trooper Murico Stephens said.

McCormick and Smeltzer had just interviewed Tryon Fire Chief Geoffrey Tennant. They told Tennant to be careful with Alberto's remnant expected to bring more heavy rains and mudslides this week. He told them to be careful too.

"Ten minutes later we get the call and it was them," Tennant said at a news conference, his voice cracking.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Adolphe Bernotas.

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The wounded printed page strikes back (Washington Times)

By Wesley Pruden

ANALYSIS/OPINION:

Fake news is everywhere, cluttering desktops, iPads, laptops, iPhones and all the other manifestations of the post-literate era when it's just too much trouble to find a reliable read.

Who needs to read when there's such an abundance of tweets clogging up Twitterworld with the trivia, the trifling and the picayune - misinformation, usually the work of innocents, and disinformation, always the work of rogues spreading deliberate lies, exaggerations and confusion.

Farhad Manjoo, a technology correspondent for The New York Times, was tired of it all. Six months ago, he turned off all his digital news notifications, unplugged social networks, said goodbye to the cacophony and other noise of the news feed and took the radical step of subscribing to, of all things, three ink-on-paper newspapers and a weekly magazine.

He wanted to "slow-jam the news" but still wanted to know what was going on in the world. He was determined to find sources that furnished depth and prized accuracy over speed. It was an experiment, relying on print for news and not on "social media." He learned several interesting things.

Read more [here](#). Shared by John Terino.

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The Sale of Cambodia's Last Independent Newspaper Pushes Press Freedom Into Peril

(Time)

By ELI MEIXLER

I still remember my first day on the job as an intern on the photo desk at the Phnom Penh Post.

"Want to go to a land protest?" asked my editor.

I was 23 years old, and I had barely managed to leave an imprint on a newsroom chair, at the Post or elsewhere. I grabbed my camera and hopped on the back of a motorbike to Boeung Kak, a 220-acre lake in the center of the capital city that had been drained to make way for commercial developments. Authorities were trying to build a military police station in the middle of a lakeside village, and local residents feared losing the very land their houses stood on. I remember feeling stunned to be reporting on conflict between a people and their government over an issue as basic as having a place to live.

For 26 years, the Phnom Penh Post has operated at the center of conflicts like these. But the future of Cambodia's last truly independent paper is in peril.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Kevin Walsh.

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Lynsey Addario - It's What I Do: A Photographer's Life of Love and War

Lynsey Addario was just finding her way as a photographer when September 11th changed the world. One of the few photojournalists with experience in Afghanistan, she gets the call to return and cover the American invasion. She makes a decision she would often find herself making-not to stay home, not to lead a quiet or predictable life, but to risk her life, to set out across the world, and to make a name for herself. It's What I Do follows a course unavoidable for Addario-from her first

camera and the pictures it inspired, to early years as a street photographer and the inspiration she found in the work of Sebastião Salgado. Photography becomes a way for her to travel with a purpose—a singular ambition that shapes and drives her.

As a woman photojournalist determined to be taken as seriously as her male peers, Addario fights her way into a boy's club of a profession, eventually earning widespread recognition, a MacArthur Genius Grant, and a Pulitzer Prize. Refusing to turn down career-defining assignments, she puts romance and family on hold. Yet the sadness and injustice she encounters as a conflict reporter give her a new vision for her own life, and the more she sees of the world, the greater her desires for love and family grow. *It's What I Do* is also the story of how Addario met her husband and father to their child, and how as a war correspondent and a mother, she learned to live her life in two different—though hardly separate—worlds.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

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In 'Reporter,' Seymour Hersh Recounts Leaping Tall Deadlines in Single Bounds (New York Times book review)

By DWIGHT GARNER

The qualities that make Seymour Hersh a first-rate reporter - his hustle, his wonkiness, his nighthawk drive to unearth a radioactive fact and then top that fact - make him a second-rate memoirist. Like a greyhound or a kamikaze pilot or an insurance man peddling a policy (he sometimes reminds the reader of each), he's not built for reflection.

It's all here in his new memoir, "Reporter," if by "all" we mean the filing-cabinet details behind his greatest scoops, the settling dust of old deadline clashes. Hersh won a Pulitzer Prize in 1970, at 33, for his freelance expose on the massacre by American troops at My Lai village during the Vietnam War.

He was soon hired by The New York Times and, during the 1970s and early '80s, did supersnoop work on stories including Watergate, the secret bombing of Cambodia, and C.I.A. spying on domestic antiwar protesters.

Writing for The New Yorker later in his career, he was largely responsible for alerting the world to the torture of prisoners by Americans at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad.

Read more [here](#).

Today in History - May 29, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, May 29, the 149th day of 2018. There are 216 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 29, 1953, Mount Everest was conquered as Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tensing Norgay of Nepal became the first climbers to reach the summit.

On this date:

In 1453, Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks, marking the end of the Byzantine Empire.

In 1660, Britain's King Charles II was restored to the throne on his 30th birthday after nine years in exile.

In 1765, Patrick Henry denounced the Stamp Act before Virginia's House of Burgesses.

In 1790, Rhode Island became the 13th original colony to ratify the United States Constitution.

In 1848, Wisconsin became the 30th state of the union.

In 1917, the 35th president of the United States, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, was born in Brookline, Massachusetts.

In 1932, World War I veterans began arriving in Washington to demand cash bonuses they weren't scheduled to receive until 1945.

In 1943, Norman Rockwell's portrait of "Rosie the Riveter" appeared on the cover of The Saturday Evening Post. (The model for Rockwell's Rosie, Mary Doyle Keefe, died in April 2015 at age 92.)

In 1961, a couple in Paynesville, West Virginia, became the first recipients of food stamps under a pilot program created by President John F. Kennedy.

In 1977, Janet Guthrie became the first woman to race in the Indianapolis 500, finishing in 29th place (the winner was A.J. Foyt).

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev opened their historic summit in Moscow.

In 1998, Republican elder statesman Barry Goldwater died in Paradise Valley, Arizona, at age 89.

Ten years ago: The Vatican issued a decree stating that anyone trying to ordain a woman as a priest and any woman who attempted to receive the ordination would incur automatic excommunication. Actor-comedian Harvey Korman, Emmy winner for "The Carol Burnett Show," died in Los Angeles at age 81.

Five years ago: A U.S. drone strike killed Waliur Rehman (wah-lee-UR' REH'-man), the No. 2 commander of the Pakistani Taliban. Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, a conservative firebrand and a favorite of tea party Republicans, said she would not run for another term in the U.S. House. The Rev. Andrew Greeley, 85, an outspoken Roman Catholic priest, best-selling author and longtime newspaper columnist, died in Chicago.

One year ago: In his first Memorial Day remarks as president, Donald Trump expressed the nation's "boundless and undying" gratitude to Americans who had fallen in battle and to the families they left behind, hailing as heroes the hundreds of thousands buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Americans turned out by the thousands to celebrate the life and legacy of President John F. Kennedy on the day he would have turned 100. Manuel Noriega, a onetime U.S. ally who was ousted as Panama's dictator by an American invasion in 1989, died at age 83.

Today's Birthdays: Former Baseball Commissioner Fay Vincent is 80. Motorsports Hall of Famer Al Unser is 79. Actor Kevin Conway is 76. Actor Helmut Berger is 74. Rock singer Gary Brooker (Procol Harum) is 73. Actor Anthony Geary is 71. Actor Cotter Smith is 69. Singer Rebbie (ree-bee) Jackson is 68. Movie composer Danny Elfman is 65. Singer LaToya Jackson is 62. Actor Ted Levine is 61. Actress Annette Bening is 60. Actor Rupert Everett is 59. Actor Adrian Paul is 59. Singer Melissa Etheridge is 57. Actress Lisa Whelchel is 55. Actress Tracey Bregman is 55. Rock musician Noel Gallagher is 51. Singer Jayski McGowan (Quad City DJ's) is 51. Actor Anthony Azizi is 49. Rock musician Chan Kinchla (Blues Traveler) is 49. Actress Laverne Cox is 46. Rock musician Mark Lee (Third Day) is 45. Cartoonist Aaron McGruder ("The Boondocks") is 44. Singer Melanie Brown (Spice Girls) is 43. Rapper Playa Poncho is 43. Latin singer Fonseca is 39. Actor Justin Chon (TV: "Deception"; "Dr. Ken") is 37. NBA player Carmelo Anthony is 34. Actor Billy Flynn is 33. Actor Blake Foster is 33. Actress Riley Keough is 29. Actor Brandon Mychal Smith is 29. Actress Kristen Alderson is 27. Actress Lorelei Linklater is 25.

Thought for Today: "A pessimist and an optimist, so much the worse; so much the better." - Jean de La Fontaine, French poet (1621-1695).

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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