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# Connecting - January 23, 2019

1 message

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# Connecting

January 23, 2019

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Colleagues,

Good Wednesday morning!

Do you remember the job interview that didn't work out - meaning, no job came out of it?

It has happened to most all of us - although for some, it led to something even better down the line.

That was the case for Connecting colleague **Ed Williams**, journalism professor emeritus at Auburn University, in sharing the **story** of the death last Saturday of **Jim Jacobson**, editor of The Birmingham News from 1978-1997 during a period when Alabama's largest newspaper won its first Pulitzer Prize.



**Jim Jacobson**

It seems that when Ed graduated from the University of Alabama, he interviewed with Jacobson for a reporter's job at the News - but wasn't hired. As Ed explains in our opening story in today's issue, he went on to a rewarding career in community newspapering and then taught journalism at Auburn for 30 years.

**What about you?** Ever interview for that job you really wanted and get turned down? How'd you handle it. How'd it turn out? Send along your story to Connecting.

## **Judges needed for AP state contests - how about you?**

**Cliff Schiappa** - There's no better way to appreciate the good work being done in the journalism industry today than to be a judge for one of AP's state contests. With deadlines for more than 37 different contests fast approaching, we need about 1,000 judges to handle the heavy load of entries from small, medium, and large newspapers and broadcast outlets. If you are a former/retired newspaper or broadcast journalist or instructor willing to devote a few hours to review stories, headlines, newscasts, photos, websites, videography, or scripts, please contact Heidi Brown at [hbrown@ap.org](mailto:hbrown@ap.org)

To thank you for your efforts, you will receive a one-year online subscription to the AP Stylebook.

Have a great day!

Paul

***An 'unanswered prayer':***

# Turned down at big-city daily, he forges career in community newspapers, university teaching



Ed Williams (left) with Jack Simms in October 2016 when Jack turned 90. Jack died a few weeks later. Jack was head of the Auburn University journalism school when he hired Ed to the journalism faculty. Jack earlier worked for the AP as a chief of bureau and in New York Sports as deputy general sports editor.

**Ed Williams (Email)** - Jim Jacobson was a good man, always real supportive of journalism at Auburn University where I was on the journalism faculty for 30 years. He hired a lot of our students for internships and jobs, and came to Auburn on a number of occasions to speak to our classes. The students respected Jim for the professional that he was.

I kidded Jim once that he did me a favor by not hiring me to work on the state's largest newspaper when I interviewed with him when I got out of college. I went to work on an excellent weekly newspaper instead, and that was the best experience I could have had, a great start for my newspaper career.

And I found out that I loved community journalism and weekly newspapers!

Interviewing for a job you thought you really wanted and not getting it sort of reminds me of that Garth Brooks song "Unanswered Prayers."

***"Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers,  
Remember when you're talkin' to the man upstairs,  
That just because he doesn't answer doesn't mean he don't care  
Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers."***

When I was in college I saw myself working at big-city newspapers but I wound up in Alabama community journalism instead.

I covered city council, county commission, school board, fires, wrecks, dinner on the grounds, and Friday night high school football. Shot lots of photos and developed lots of film. And if I messed up and made a mistake. I saw my source face-to-face in the grocery store or church on Sunday. That really teaches you about getting the facts right, being responsible and facing up to your mistakes.

A call came one day from Jack Simms, head of the journalism department at Auburn University.

Jack had spent 25 years with The Associated Press and had come to Auburn to build a journalism department.

Jack asked me if I could teach newspaper makeup and layout. "Yessir I do it every day." Can you teach photojournalism? "Sure."

He went through the list of classes that I might be called upon to teach and I had confidence that I could teach all of them. One of the classes that Jack mentioned that I might be called upon to teach was community journalism.

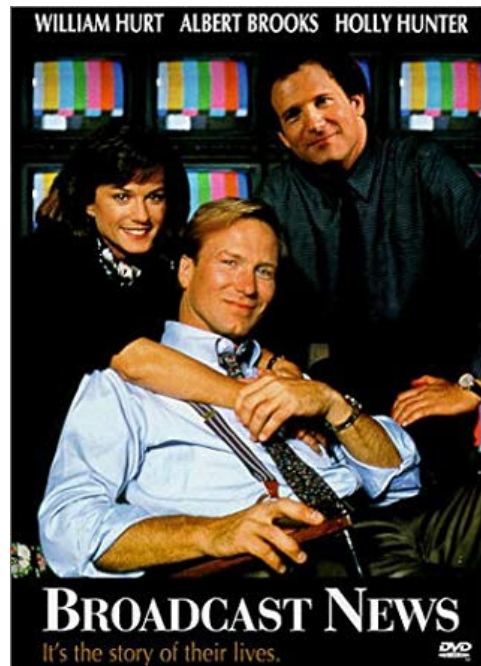
Thus started a 30-year teaching career in the best job I ever had.

## Connecting mailbox

### *On those journalism films at the University of Kansas*

**Lee Mitgang** ([Email](#)) - I love the list of films being viewed by University of Kansas J-school students (see Tuesday's Connecting).

I'd add one of my favorites: the brilliantly satirical "Broadcast News," (1987) starring William Hurt, Holly Hunter and the great Albert Brooks as an angry, self-righteous TV foreign correspondent who finds himself locked in an on-air rivalry with a handsome, charismatic but shallow news reader played by Hurt. You know who has to win that one, and the image-over-substance theme rings true enough. But the film provides each of the lead characters enough quirkiness and human fragility to avoid the trap of caricature. Hunter gives a standout performance as the romantic focus of a love triangle while proving her mettle as a gifted news exec. And who can forget Brooks's "flop sweat" scene? A sharp, hilarious movie.



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**Dan Close** ([Email](#)) - How about "-30-"

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**John Wylie** ([Email](#)) - OK, I'm cheating, but I vote for a 3-way tie: Spotlight, All the President's Men, and Good Night and Good Luck. Each in its own way provides a solid view of the agony and sometimes ecstasy inherent in investigative reporting and the great pains those who practice it seriously take to get it right. All are great

antidotes to both cries of "Fake news" and over-glamorization of what can be a very UNglamorous job--and all strongly reinforce that job's importance to a free society.

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## ***Here's my take on NFL playoffs***

**Ray Newton** ([Email](#)) - I am surprised that I've read nothing about the playoff games-either of them-in your blog. Here's my take"

The call in the Rams' game-or lack of one. Disgusting. No more NFL games for those officials.

The Chiefs' loss--disappointing.

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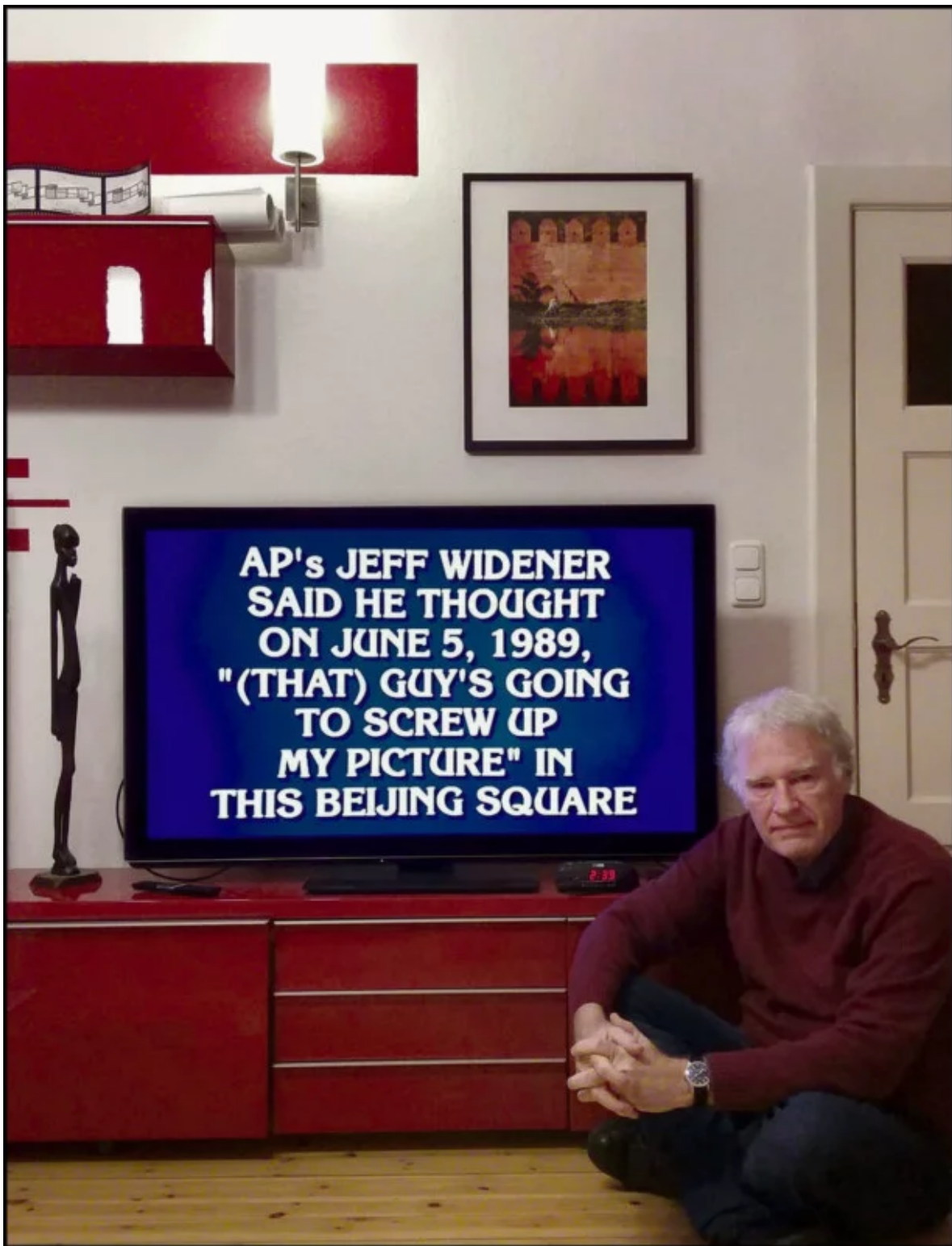
## ***A fashionable welcome to The Wichita Eagle***



**Julie Doll** ([Email](#)) - The photo of the newspaper flowers (in Tuesday's Connecting) prompted me to go to Carrie Rengers' Wichita Eagle column online and find this creation from a Wichita designer, who welcomed the newspaper staff to the neighborhood with style.

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

## 'Tank Man' Photographer Finds Himself in a Jeopardy Clue



By **MICHAEL ZHANG**, PetaPixel

You know you've established your photographic legacy when you show up as a clue on Jeopardy, and that's what happened to photographer Jeff Widener a few days



ago. One of the clues on the ever-popular trivia game show focused on Widener's iconic "Tank Man" photo.

"Tonight January 17, 2019, I had my 15-minutes of fame as the \$400 trivia question on Jeopardy under the category 'FER SURE, IT WAS THE '80s'," Widener writes on Facebook.

The clue read: "AP's Jeff Widener said he thought on June 5, 1989, '(That) guy's going to screw up my picture' in this Beijing square."

The answer was: "What is Tiananmen Square."



Widener's most famous photo was captured in that square on June 5, 1989, in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square protests. The photo came to be known as "Tank Man," and it shows a protester standing in front of a column of Chinese military tanks. It is now considered one of the most iconic photos ever shot.

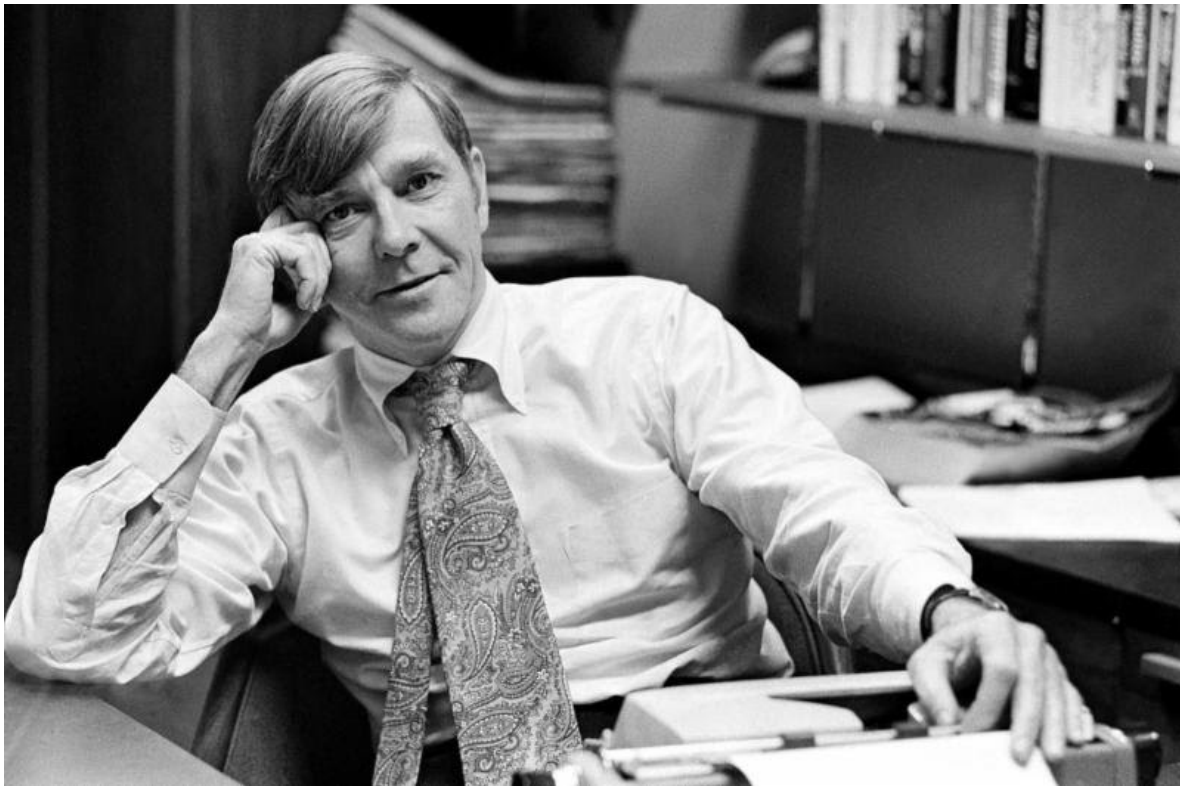
"It's true that I first thought the 'Tank Man' would mess up my composition of a line of tanks at Tiananmen Square but that was before he made his famous standoff," Widener writes. "I had been hit in the face by a rock during a burning armored car incident the night before so I was not really thinking clearly when I made the photo."

"So many cool things have happened in my life because of 'Tank Man'."

Click [here](#) for link to this story. Shared by Doug Pizac.

## Stories of interest

### ***Russell Baker, Times Columnist and Celebrated Humorist, Dies at 93*** (New York Times)



**Russell Baker in 1971. He spent decades at The New York Times, and his writings twice earned him the Pulitzer Prize. Photo by Israel Shenker**

**By Robert D. McFadden**

Russell Baker, the two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author whose whimsical, irreverent "Observer" column appeared in The New York Times and hundreds of other newspapers for 36 years and turned a backwoods-born Virginian into one of America's most celebrated writers, died on Monday at his home in Leesburg, Va. He was 93.

The cause was complications from a fall, according to his son Allen Baker.

Mr. Baker, along with the syndicated columnist Art Buchwald (who died in 2007), was one of the best-known newspaper humorists of his time, and The Washington Post ranked his best-selling autobiography, "Growing Up," with the most enduring recollections of American boyhood - those of James Thurber, H. L. Mencken and Mark Twain.

In a career begun in a rakish fedora and the smoky press rooms of the 1940s, Mr. Baker was a police reporter, a rewrite man and a London correspondent for The Baltimore Sun, and after 1954 a Washington correspondent for The Times, rising swiftly with a clattering typewriter and a deft writer's touch to cover the White House, Congress and the presidential campaigns of 1956 and 1960.

Read more [here](#).

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## ***Donald Trump Says He Told Sarah Sanders 'Not To Bother' With White House Briefings***

(Huffington Post)

**By KIMBERLEY RICHARDS**

President Donald Trump shared on Twitter that he has told Sarah Sanders "not to bother" with White House press briefings, citing his belief that she's been covered unfairly in the media.

The president's tweet, published on Tuesday, was in response to growing criticism that the White House has not held a press briefing in over a month - or since the partial government shutdown, which began on Dec. 22.

"The reason Sarah Sanders does not go to the 'podium' much anymore is that the press covers her so rudely & inaccurately, in particular certain members of the press," Trump wrote.

"I told her not to bother, the word gets out anyway!" he continued "Most will never cover us fairly & hence, the term, Fake News!"

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

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## ***Jill Abramson's Book Charts Journalism's Stormy Seas, With Some Personal Regrets and Score-Settling*** (New York Times)

By Nicholas Thompson

### **MERCHANTS OF TRUTH**

#### **The Business of News and the Fight for Facts**

By Jill Abramson

**534 pp. Simon & Schuster. \$30.**

In the early spring of 2014, A. G. Sulzberger, then an editor on the metro desk of The New York Times, handed Jill Abramson, the executive editor, a copy of the "innovation report." Sulzberger and a team of colleagues had been working on the document for months, and they'd produced a vivisection of the paper. The Times had been slow to adapt to the emergence of new digital platforms; it had thumbed its nose at the internet and thus the future. The report was insightful, enlightened and tough. And it drove Abramson over the edge.

She was upset because she didn't think it credited her enough. Not a word of praise was offered for her having helped unite [nytimes.com](#) and the main newsroom. Worse, the report also encouraged The Times to loosen the barriers dividing the editorial and business sides. That, to her, was a road to perdition. "For me, it was an epic defeat," she writes. She had wanted to be the executive editor who protected the newsroom from "crass commercialism"; she had wanted to avoid "metric charts influencing editors to promote stories according to their traffic."

She raged quietly and plotted.

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

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# The Final Word

## ***Does Journalism Have a Future?*** (New Yorker)

By JILL LEPORE

The wood-panelled tailgate of the 1972 Oldsmobile station wagon dangled open like a broken jaw, making a wobbly bench on which four kids could sit, eight legs swinging. Every Sunday morning, long before dawn, we'd get yanked out of bed to stuff the car's way-back with stacks of twine-tied newspapers, clamber onto the tailgate, cut the twine with my mother's sewing scissors, and ride around town, bouncing along on that bench, while my father shouted out orders from the driver's seat. "Watch out for the dog!" he'd holler between draws on his pipe. "Inside the screen door!" "Mailbox!" As the car crept along, never stopping, we'd each grab a paper and dash in the dark across icy driveways or dew-drunk grass, crashing, seasonally, into unexpected snowmen. "Back porch!" "Money under the mat!" He kept a list, scrawled on the back of an envelope, taped to the dashboard: the Accounts. "They owe three weeks!" He didn't need to remind us. We knew each Doberman and every debt. We'd deliver our papers-Worcester Sunday Telegrams-and then run back to the car and scramble onto the tailgate, dropping the coins we'd collected into empty Briggs tobacco tins as we bumped along to the next turn, the newspaper route our Sabbath.

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

## Today in History - January 23, 2019



## By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 23, the 23rd day of 2019. There are 342 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 23, 1845, Congress decided all national elections would be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

### On this date:

In 1368, China's Ming dynasty, which lasted nearly three centuries, began as Zhu Yuanzhang was formally acclaimed emperor following the collapse of the Yuan dynasty.

In 1789, Georgetown University was established in present-day Washington, D.C.

In 1932, New York Gov. Franklin D. Roosevelt announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination.

In 1933, the 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the so-called "Lame Duck Amendment," was ratified as Missouri approved it.

In 1950, the Israeli Knesset approved a resolution affirming Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

In 1962, Jackie Robinson was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility. Tony Bennett recorded "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" in New York for Columbia Records.

In 1964, the 24th Amendment to the United States Constitution, eliminating the poll tax in federal elections, was ratified as South Dakota became the 38th state to endorse it.

In 1968, North Korea seized the U.S. Navy intelligence ship USS Pueblo, commanded by Lloyd "Pete" Bucher, charging its crew with being on a spying mission; one sailor was killed and 82 were taken prisoner. (Cmdr. Bucher and his crew were released the following December after enduring 11 months of brutal captivity at the hands of the North Koreans.)

In 1978, rock musician Terry Kath, a key member of the group Chicago, accidentally shot himself to death following a party in Woodland Hills, California; he was 31.

In 1989, surrealist artist Salvador Dali died in his native Figueres, Spain, at age 84.

In 1998, a judge in Fairfax, Virginia, sentenced Aimal Khan Kasi (eye-MAHL' kahn KAH'-see) to death for an assault rifle attack outside CIA headquarters in 1993 that killed two men and wounded three other people. (Kasi was executed in November 2002.)

In 2005, former "Tonight Show" host Johnny Carson died in Los Angeles at age 79.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama quietly ended the Bush administration's ban on giving federal money to international groups that performed abortions or provided information on the option. New York Gov. David Paterson chose Democratic Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand (KEHR'-sten JIL'-uh-brand) to fill the Senate seat vacated by Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Five years ago: Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered immediate actions to define the depth of trouble inside the nation's nuclear force, which had been rocked by disclosures about security lapses, poor discipline, weak morale and other problems. A fire at a seniors' home in L'Isle-Verte, Quebec, Canada, killed 32 people. Pop star Justin Bieber was arrested in Miami Beach, Florida, on charges of driving under the influence, resisting arrest and driving with an expired license.

(Bieber later pleaded guilty to careless driving and resisting arrest under a deal that spared him jail time.)

One year ago: An early-morning shooting at a high school in Benton, Kentucky, left two 15-year-old students dead and more than a dozen others injured; authorities charged a 15-year-old classmate with murder and assault. LeBron James, at 33, became the youngest player in NBA history with 30,000 career points, reaching that mark during the Cleveland Cavaliers' 114-102 loss to the San Antonio Spurs; he was the seventh player to score that many points in his career. "The Shape of Water" led the way with 13 Academy Award nominations, including one for best picture.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Chita Rivera is 86. Actor-director Lou Antonio is 85. Jazz musician Gary Burton is 76. Actor Gil Gerard is 76. Actor Rutger Hauer is 75. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jerry Lawson is 75. Sen. Thomas R. Carper, D-Del., is 72. Singer Anita Pointer is 71. Actor Richard Dean Anderson is 69. Rock musician Bill Cunningham is 69. Rock singer Robin Zander (Cheap Trick) is 66. Former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (vee-yah-ry-GOH'-sah) is 66. Princess Caroline of Monaco is 62. Singer Anita Baker is 61. Reggae musician Earl Falconer (UB40) is 60. Actor Boris McGiver is 57. Actress Gail O'Grady is 56. Actress Mariska Hargitay is 55. Rhythm-and-blues singer Marc Nelson is 48. TV host Norah O'Donnell is 45. Actress Tiffani Thiessen is 45. Rock musician Nick Harmer (Death Cab for Cutie) is 44. Actress Lindsey Kraft is 39. Christian rock musician Nick DePartee (Kutless) is 34. Singer-actress Rachel Crow is 21.

**Thought for Today: "The trouble is that hardly anybody in America goes to bed angry at night." - George J. Stigler, American economist (1911-1991).**

## 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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