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Connecting

May 18, 2021

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Building formerly housing Associated Press bureau and other news media in Gaza City lies in ruins after being destroyed by Israeli airstrike Saturday.

Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this the 18th day of May 2021.

The Associated Press on Monday again stated it had "no indication" Hamas was in its 12-story Gaza City building that was demolished Saturday by an Israeli airstrike. Israel Defense Forces allege the militant organization had been using the site for weapons manufacturing and military intelligence.

The AP had operated from the building for 15 years, including through three previous wars between Israel and Hamas, without being targeted directly. During those conflicts as well as the current one, the news agency's cameras from its top floor office and roof terrace offered 24-hour live shots as militants' rockets arched toward Israel and Israeli airstrikes hammered the city and its surroundings.

"We have had no indication Hamas was in the building or active in the building," AP President and CEO **Gary Pruitt** said in a statement. "This is something we actively check to the best of our ability. We would never knowingly put our journalists at risk."

Pruitt's statement came as social media and Twitter posts alleged the company knew Hamas had been sharing the building. In a story originally headlined "[Associated Press slammed for claim it was unaware of Hamas in building](#)," the New York Post cited a 2014 story in The Atlantic by former AP reporter **Matti Friedman** in Jerusalem who asserted AP staff in Gaza City would witness rocket launches beside their office or be intimidated by Hamas intruders and not report it. AP responded Monday by pointing to a [2014 press release in which it discounted in detail](#) many of Friedman's claims. AP said at the time Friedman's "arguments have been filled with distortions, half-truths and inaccuracies, both about the recent Gaza war and more distant events. His suggestion of AP bias against Israel is false."

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State **Antony Blinken**, speaking at a news conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, said he had seen no information justifying the airstrike. "Shortly after the strike we did request additional details regarding the justification for it," he said. He declined to discuss specific intelligence, saying he "will leave it to others to characterize if any information has been shared and our assessment (of) that information."

White House press secretary **Jen Psaki** declined to say whether President Biden had viewed intelligence that the Israeli government says it shared with the U.S. justifying the airstrike. "I'm not going to be in a position now or ever of committing or confirming who has or hasn't seen intelligence," she told reporters.

The Jerusalem Post, citing Israeli officials, reported over the weekend Israel shared intelligence showing that Hamas was operating out of the building. The building housed the AP and Al Jazeera; journalists were given short warning before the strike and no one was harmed. Israeli Prime Minister **Benjamin Netanyahu** also said in an interview on CBS's "Face the Nation" that the Israeli government shared intelligence with the U.S. linking the building to Hamas.

Who mentored you in your career? Who did you help along the way? Connecting asked those questions last week, and two more colleagues share their experiences in today's mailbox. Who was there for you when you really weren't sure what to do next? How did you help a young co-worker find their path?

Want to live longer? Eat more chicken. More specifically, a certain part of the chicken. Be sure not to miss which one in **The Final Word**.

Paul Stevens returns Tuesday. Send stories, tips, photos to him at paulstevens46@gmail.com

Have a great day. Stay safe.

- *Mark Mittelstadt*

Pruitt: We would never knowingly put our journalists at risk

Statement Monday from AP President and CEO Gary Pruitt:

AP continues to call for an independent investigation into the destruction of the building housing our Gaza bureau so that the facts are known.

As we have said, we have no indication of a Hamas presence in the building, nor were we warned of any such possible presence before the airstrike. This is something we check as best we can. We do not know what the Israeli evidence shows, and we want to know.

Had we seen any credible information that our journalists were at risk or our ability to report the news accurately and fairly was compromised, we would have taken action to address the situation. We would never knowingly put our journalists at risk.

AP's role is to report what is factually happening to the best of our ability. We are proud of our staff in Gaza, Israel, and across the region who continue to produce a factual, independent and comprehensive news report.

Statement [here](#).

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Cotton: AP has 'uncomfortable questions to answer' for sharing Gaza building with Hamas (FOX News)

Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., took aim at the Associated Press for allegedly sharing a workspace with Hamas after Israel operated a military strike against a building in Gaza

the Jewish State claims housed offices for the terrorist organization.

There was an international outcry among journalists over the weekend after Israel destroyed a building that included the Gaza bureaus of media outlets like the Associated Press and Al Jazeera over intelligence that Hamas had military operations at that location. Journalists and residents were warned and evacuated before the strike was conducted.

While the Associated Press denied having any prior knowledge of Hamas' presence in the 15 years of being located in that building, Cotton expressed far more skepticism on the Senate floor.

"Why is the Associated Press sharing a building with Hamas?" Cotton asked on Monday. "Surely these intrepid reporters knew who their neighbors were."

He continued, "Did they knowingly allow themselves to be used as human shields by a US-designated terrorist organization? Did the AP pull its punches and decline to report for years on Hamas' misdeeds?"

Read more [here](#).

Also:

[If AP really didn't know it shared space with Hamas, why trust its reporting?](#) (New York Post Editorial Board)

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The rubble of a building that was destroyed by an Israeli airstrike on Saturday that housed The Associated Press, broadcaster Al-Jazeera and other media outlets. (AP Photo/Adel Hana)

Proximity and possible deception complicate media coverage of the Israel - Palestine conflict (Poynter)

On Saturday, an Israeli airstrike leveled a 12-story building in Gaza City. Israel claimed the building was home to military assets belonging to Hamas, the Palestinian militant group.

But there was more in that building. It also contained the offices of The Associated Press, Al Jazeera and other media outlets. And while advanced warning of the bombing allowed the journalists who worked there to evacuate with their lives, that's pretty much all they escaped with. Valuable equipment and records were lost as the building was destroyed.

"The world will know less about what is happening in Gaza because of what happened today," AP president and CEO Gary Pruitt said in a statement. "We are shocked and horrified that the Israeli military would target and destroy the building housing AP's bureau and other news organizations in Gaza. This is an incredibly disturbing development. We narrowly avoided a terrible loss of life."

But now the question is: Did the building really house Hamas?

In a compelling interview on CNN's "Reliable Sources" on Sunday, Israel Defense Forces Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus said, "Not only was Hamas in the building, it was actively using it to fight against Israel. ... Out of consideration for human life and for the people who work there, we chose to forfeit additional military gains by surprise attacking. And instead, we did what of course is the right thing to do: advance warning and allowed everybody to clear, vacate the premises and made sure that everybody was out before the building was struck."

But Stelter showed his excellent journalistic chops by pressing Conricus for proof that Hamas was in the building and, in effect, using the media and others as "human shields."

"Can you show us the evidence?" Stelter asked. "Can you hold it up? Can you show us the pictures, the intelligence you have?"

Conricus said evidence would be shown in "due time," but Stelter deftly cut him off and said, "Shouldn't that have happened 24 hours ago?"

Read more [here](#).

Gaps: Israel has record of targeting journalists during times of unrest

By JOHN GAPS III

Family and friends have been asking me what I think of the warfare going on in the Middle East this past week. Until today I kept very quiet, saying I haven't been in Israel or the Palestinian territories since 1994. But after the Israeli attack on the building in Gaza City that housed my beloved Associated Press, I'm going to comment.

- Put aside the conflict of the Jewish settlers taking the homes of Palestinians in the West Bank.
- Put aside the fact that Hamas tragically escalated to war with some 2,700 rockets fired from Gaza toward the heart of Jerusalem.
- Put aside Israel's right to defend itself by targeting Hamas military positions that launched those deadly rockets.

The attack was specifically against legitimate news organizations. Don't forget that Al Jazeera was also housed in the building that was taken to the ground with precision bombing by the Israelis.

In 1994 I was sent to cover the unrest after the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre carried out by Israeli right wing militant Baruch Goldstein. Reports came that the Israeli military were gunning down young Palestinian protestors in the Occupied Gaza Strip. I made my way south from Jerusalem.



Children and teenagers were being crippled and killed by the dozens. The kids threw rocks, the Israelis fired live rounds along with teargas. For three days I chronicled this violence, moving pictures of the young Palestinians being wounded and killed. After getting play in major Western newspapers I was intentionally targeted to be removed from Gaza. On March 7, 1994 a sniper team was dispatched to gun me down and they did.

(Above) an injured child is carried away for emergency help. (Right) John Gaps III taken for medical attention after being shot in the knee.

After emergency surgery in Gaza I left Israel in a wheelchair. To this day I limp from the damage done to my right knee. According to the Israeli Army "the officer was found guilty of not following the standard open-fire (orders)... and was issued a warning."

Israel has a record of targeting media members during times of unrest. In March of 1985 an Israeli tank fired at and killed a CBS cameraman and soundman in Beirut. More recently, Reuters cameraman Fadel Shana was targeted and killed by tankfire that "recklessly or deliberately" zeroed in on him, even though there was no combat taking place at the time.



Targeting of journalists is a crime. The Israeli military are acting as criminals when they attack the messengers for a free and open global society. Amen.

John Gaps III is a former Associated Press photographer covering assignments in Somalia, Haiti, Kosovo, the Gulf War, Los Angeles, Israel, Lebanon, Latin America and sports tournaments in Iowa and Nebraska. He authored a book "God Left Us Alone Here: A Book of War."

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Rosenblum: Eyeless in Gaza

By MORT ROSENBLUM

TUCSON — Some scenes you never forget. My memory just replayed one morning in Hebron, yet again, and I dug out a dispatch that the Associated Press had sent to newspapers and broadcasters around the world. It began:

“At 9 a.m. sharp, the first sounds were young men hauling junk-metal barricades into place. Next came a fury of flying stones and insults. Then it was the Israelis’ turn. Troops burst from alleys, bellowing karate yells and brandishing M-16s. Mesh-plated jeeps screamed around corners. Some youths were pushed around and arrested. Most fled. Ten minutes later, dead calm.

“It was curfew time in Hebron, the ancient city of the patriarchs, which is the crux of Tuesday’s urgent White House summit aimed at heading off yet more Arab-Israeli war.”

That was in October 1996. Bill Clinton now watches offstage. Yasser Arafat is long gone. But Benjamin Netanyahu and Hamas are still at it. And Palestine today is pocked with thriving Jewish suburbs, “settlements” in an apartheid homeland.

Reality bit hard that morning in Hebron. After a three-hour daily reprieve to buy food, 94,000 Palestinians stayed inside by their radios as leaders at opposite extremes argued over their fate.

Behind iron grillwork, they watched young settlers saunter through town as if they owned it, eating cotton candy on their way to the tombs of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Or for Muslims who also revere them, Ibrahim, Ishak and Yaakub.

“They look at us behind our bars like we are lions or monkeys in a zoo,” vegetable vendor Samir Saleb told me. He was less angry than sad. “The Jews walk by and laugh at us. And not only the Jews. The whole world is laughing at us.”

Yet again, all hell has broken loose in the Holy Land. Beyond headlines, the devil is in the details. Decades of broken promises, terrorist provocations, retaliation and colonization are leading toward an inevitable reckoning.

I call these reports “non-prophet” because journalists should avoid guessing about the future. But the message here is plain as writing on the wall. Unless Palestinians figure into the equation, Israel faces grave existential peril.

Growing virulent anti-Semitism, more political than religious, already extends far beyond the Middle East. In an America at war with itself, violence triggered by new

hatreds seems bound to increase.

Right and wrong depend on one's view of the last 5,000 years, particularly since 1947 when the outside world carved out boundaries for a Jewish state in what was British Palestine.

Read more [here](#).

Mort Rosenblum is a former Associated Press correspondent who has reported from seven continents. He has authored numerous books.

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Connecting mailbox

Mentoring; the unselfish act

Dennis Kois ([Email](#)) _ I'll give a tip of the hat to Pete Seymour, who was at AP Milwaukee when I arrived. Pete was a terrific writer/editor and a veteran AP news guy. Open, friendly, funny, easy to work with and very willing to offer good advice and encouragement.

Mike O'Brien, the sports guy in the bureau, was also a terrific role model and an amazing sportswriter. He taught me so much as he led by example in his coverage of the Brewers, Bucks, Packers and Badgers.

And Tim Curran, a news editor in Milwaukee, demonstrated a focus on getting it right that was worth emulating.

AP was a wonderful learning and growing opportunity for me thanks to the crew I worked with.

It was my stepping-off point to a career in corporate communications.

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Gene Herrick ([Email](#)) _ Mentoring to someone who doesn't understand their hidden skills and talents, is a great act of kindness, and unselfishness.

Connecting has been carrying a series on mentoring, which has shown the strength and depth of many of our journalist members.

Among the ones I have done over the years, there are three that ring a bell.

In 1950, while an AP War Correspondent in Korea, a young Stars and Stripes reporter started following me on assignments. We did not know each other, but met on the communications ship U.S.S. Mount McKinley. For a short while after that he just tagged along. Much of the 7th fleet was just outside the harbor of Wonsan, where a major attack landing was to take place. It was delayed by enemy mines in the harbor. I decided to go aboard one of the minesweepers for a story and pictures. My new friend tagged along. The ship only had four officers, and four bunks. The officers decided they would let us sleep in two of them, and they would rotate, leaving us to get a full night's sleep. Next morning we ate in the officer's Ward Room.

After we left the ship, the young enlisted, non-officer, said, "Wow, Gene, I have really lived!!! I've slept in an officer's bunk, and eaten in an officer's mess hall!!!" He was excited.

From there we returned to the communications ship. The ship's duty officer sent my new friend to non-com territory. I was assigned a bunk where Lt. Commanders sleep. (Civilian war correspondents were Captains in the Army, and Lt. Commanders in the Navy. No insignias worn; just paper rank. Later that evening, my friend snuck up to officer's Quarters, and told me the Navy would not feed him, and that he was hungry. I immediately went into the officer's mess hall and got him some food, and then took him into my sleeping quarters to eat. Then the officer with whom I shared the room, came and raised hob with my enlisted friend. I explained that his ship refused to feed him, and that he was going to stay and eat.

A short time after that we split, and I never saw him again. However, one night, some years later, I got a late night phone call from him, during which he thanked, and thanked me, over and over, for giving him a boost and a chance.

Another story involves a young Wirephoto operator in Minneapolis. He was Bob Walsh. He had planned to go into book-keeping. He used to tag along with me covering the Minnesota Twins baseball games. I would grab a couple of pictures, and run downstairs to process, print, and transmit on the Wirephoto network. While I was gone, Bob would take charge of the camera and shoot some pictures. One afternoon, I returned to the photographer's loft and let Bob continue to learn. One time, the batter slammed a long drive to right field. I told Bob to get on it. He did, but seemed slow in shooting. I told him to hit it. When he didn't, I goosed him, and the shock made him hit the button to take the picture! The picture turned out fine. He was later chosen to take my place when New York transferred me to Chicago. I explained to Al Resch that Bob would make a good AP photographer.

The third case involved a journalist student at the University of Iowa. After covering the game, I took the young man out for a couple of beers before returning to Minneapolis. A couple of years later, I received a whole page of sequential pictures on one subject, which AP used to do for small papers. There was a note attached to the page, identifying who he was, and thanking me for befriending him, and giving him a boost in life.

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One of nearly a dozen dramatic photos Nick Ut posted on Facebook showing firefighters battling the Pacific Palisades brush fire in Los Angeles County.

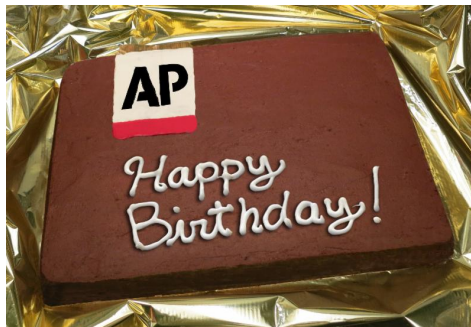
Brush fire

Nick Ut ([Email](#)) _ A suspected arsonist was on the loose Sunday morning after igniting a brush fire in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles County that has spread to more than 800 acres and is threatening homes and prompting mandatory evacuations in one of the most expensive neighborhoods in the region. The so-



called Palisades Fire in the Santa Monica Mountains was zero percent contained on Sunday as firefighters battled wind-whipped flames mowing through rugged, steep and extremely dry terrain from the ground and the air, officials said.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



John Epperson - jepperson191@gmail.com

Stories of interest

AT&T sheds its media business (The New York Times)

Just three years after it thundered into Hollywood with grand visions of streaming video on millions of its customers' cellphones, AT&T is making a stunning retreat with plans to spin off WarnerMedia and merge it with Discovery.

The blockbuster deal, announced Monday, will put CNN and the HBO hit "Succession" in the same corporate family as the reality television shows "Flip or Flop" and "90 Day Fiancé." It will create the second-biggest media company in the country, by revenue, with a sprawling business that touches on streaming entertainment, movies, sports and cable news. The merged company, which could have a value above \$100 billion, would rival behemoths like Disney, the biggest media company, as well as Netflix, the leader in streaming.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Dennis Conrad

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Zucker may extend CNN stay after Discovery-WarnerMedia deal (The Hill)

CNN President Jeff Zucker may stay in his role longer than he planned now that CNN's parent company WarnerMedia is merging with Discovery, the Los Angeles Times reported Monday. AT&T announced on Monday that it would merge WarnerMedia with Discovery Inc. to create a new, as yet unnamed public company with Discovery's CEO David Zaslav as its head. Zucker and Zaslav are friends, the Times reported. And though Zucker said he's leaving CNN at the end of 2021, he may change his mind if Zaslav does end up leading the new company, a source told the Times.

More [here](#).

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Tribune Publishing shareholders to vote on Alden deal this week (News&Tech)

Industry watchers are looking toward the May 21 shareholder vote on Alden Global Capital \$633 million bid to purchase Tribune Publishing. People opposed to the deal protested at union-organized "Save Local News" rallies in Florida, Maryland, Virginia and Connecticut, the Chicago Tribune reported. Along with the Chicago Tribune, Tribune Publishing owns The Baltimore Sun; the Hartford (Connecticut) Courant; the Orlando (Florida) Sentinel; the South Florida Sun Sentinel; the New York Daily News; the Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Maryland; The Morning Call in Allentown, Pennsylvania; the Daily Press in Newport News, Virginia; and The Virginian-Pilot in

Norfolk, Virginia. The state treasurers of Illinois, Connecticut and Maryland sent a joint letter to Tribune Publishing last week pushing the board to require a Tribune-Alden merger keep newspaper staffing level for five years and “pursue in good faith” deals to sell the papers to local buyers, said the Chicago Tribune. Three shareholders have filed suits seeking to stop the acquisition, Poynter reported.

Also:

[Chicago Tribune Guild president writes open letter asking Tribune's second-largest shareholder to oppose deal](#) Shared by Dennis Conrad

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Some states want to ban public release of mugshots

(New Hampshire Union Leader)

After a weekend in the Burleigh County, North Dakota, detention center last summer, Dustin Gawrylow was relieved when the state’s attorney decided not to press charges against him. Gawrylow, 38, had been in a fistfight with his brother — a “brotherly scuffle,” he called it — and was surprised to be arrested after going to the police to explain what happened. But even though his charges didn’t stick around, his booking photo did. “In the meantime, my mug shot got out, and it circulated widely in political circles,” said Gawrylow, who in 2012 started the North Dakota Watchdog Network, a libertarian-leaning group that advocates for lower taxes and less government spending. He testified in January in support of a North Dakota bill that would stop police from releasing booking photos like his unless the arrestee failed to appear for court, was a fugitive or was convicted. “This idea that we are throwing out these pictures to embarrass people goes against the nature of due process,” Gawrylow said. The measure failed on a narrow, bipartisan vote. But the Republican governors in Utah and Montana signed similar laws, and legislation has been proposed in at least three other states: California, New Hampshire and Oregon.

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

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TV doctor worries about a muddled pandemic message (AP)

NEW YORK -- At this stage in the pandemic, CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta is concerned that Americans are not getting clear enough messages about what they should or shouldn't be doing to keep themselves and others protected. Should people still be wearing a mask outside? (He doesn't.) What can a vaccinated person do what an unvaccinated person shouldn't? Is it safe to eat inside at a restaurant? (Not if it's full, he believes.) The veteran CNN chief medical correspondent -- who produced and narrated a documentary about the race to develop a vaccine airing this weekend -- said government medical experts have sacrificed clarity in an attempt to be comprehensive at a time vaccines are changing the outbreak's picture. Right now you have people on both extremes: those who won't let down their guard, or masks, despite 115 million Americans now fully vaccinated, and those who say "you guys don't know what you're talking about, so I'm not going to abide by any of these guidelines," he said.



Read more [here](#).

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Broadcaster Marv Albert retiring after NBA East finals

NEW YORK (AP) _ Marv Albert is retiring after the NBA's Eastern Conference finals, ending a broadcasting career spanning nearly 60 years. Albert will call the series for TNT. He has been with Turner Sports for 22 years, 19 as an NBA play-by-play announcer. Albert, known for his signature "Yes!" call, turns 80 next month. He has covered everything from football and boxing to hockey, baseball and tennis. Read more here.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

To celebrate AP's 175th anniversary, the Corporate Archives has organized "AP at 175: Conversations with History," a series of three webinars.

They are:

The AP at its beginnings and the development of a national communications system in the 19th century: Prof. Menahem Blondheim in conversation with AP Editor at Large Jerry Schwartz.

When: Thursday, May 20, 2021 11:00 AM-12:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Zoom: <https://ap.zoom.us/j/96043360939>

This event will feature

A longtime friend of the Corporate Archives, Menahem Blondheim is the Newhouse Professor of Communication in the department of communication and the department of history at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He also serves as the academic director of undergraduate studies at HU's Rothberg International school, and previously as head of the Truman Institute for the advancement of Peace. He received his BA from the Hebrew University and his MA and PhD from Harvard University in American History. An Israeli Americanist interested in things Italian, he has been a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, New York University, Ca' Foscari University in Venice, Sapienza University of Rome and Lumsa University, also in Rome.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ap.zoom.us/j/96043360939>

Meeting ID: 960 4336 0939

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The only perfect method: Kent Cooper and the birth of AP Wirephoto: Prof. Gene Allen in conversation with Creative Services Special Projects Manager Chuck Zoeller.

When: Thursday, June 03, 2021 11:00 AM-12:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Zoom: <https://ap.zoom.us/j/99279521949>

Gene Allen is a Professor in the School of Journalism at Ryerson University (Toronto) and a faculty member in the Ryerson-York Joint Graduate Program in Communication and Culture. He had an extensive and varied career as a television news and documentary producer – including a position as director of research for the CBC/Radio-Canada television series Canada: A People's History -- and as an editor and reporter for The Globe and Mail before joining Ryerson's Journalism faculty in 2001. Gene is the author of Making National News: A History of Canadian Press, which was a finalist for the Canada Prize for the Humanities in 2015. He recently completed a biography of Kent Cooper, the general manager and executive director of Associated Press from 1925 to 1951.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ap.zoom.us/j/99279521949>

Meeting ID: 992 7952 1949

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AP correspondents bring home the world: Their history in their own words: Prof. Giovanna Dell'Orto in conversation with Vice President and Editor at Large for Standards John Daniszewski.

When: Thursday, June 17, 2021 11:00 AM-12:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Where: Zoom: <https://ap.zoom.us/j/94209986199>

Giovanna Dell'Orto, Ph.D., is a former newswoman with The Associated Press (in Minneapolis, Rome, Phoenix and Atlanta). Now Associate Professor of journalism at the University of Minnesota, she teaches and researches the interplay of news production, news content and international affairs. She is the author or senior editor of six books on this topic, including an oral history of AP foreign correspondence from the Second World War to the 2010s, published by Cambridge University Press in 2015. Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ap.zoom.us/j/94209986199>

Meeting ID: 942 0998 6199

The Final Word



111-year-old Australian recommends eating chicken brains

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) _ Australia's oldest-ever man has included eating chicken brains among his secrets to living more than 111 years.

Retired cattle rancher Dexter Kruger on Monday marked 124 days since he turned 111, a day older than World War I veteran Jack Lockett was when he died in 2002.

Kruger told Australian Broadcasting Corp. in an interview at his nursing home in the rural Queensland state town of Roma days before the milestone that a weekly poultry delicacy had contributed to his longevity.

"Chicken brains. You know, chickens have a head. And in there, there's a brain. And they are delicious little things," Kruger said. "There's only one little bite."

Kruger's 74-year-old son Greg credits his father's simple Outback lifestyle for his long life.

Nursing home manager Melanie Calvert said Kruger, who is writing his autobiography, was "probably one of the sharpest residents here." "His memory is amazing for a 111-year-old," Calvert said.

John Taylor, a founder of The Australian Book of Records, confirmed that Kruger had become the oldest-ever Australian man.

The oldest-ever verified Australian was Christina Cook, who died in 2002 aged 114 years and 148 days.

Today in History - May 18, 2021



By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, May 18, the 138th day of 2021. There are 227 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 18, 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, endorsed "separate but equal" racial segregation, a concept renounced 58 years later by *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.

On this date:

In 1642, the Canadian city of Montreal was founded by French colonists. (On this date in 1765, one-quarter of Montreal was destroyed by a fire.)

In 1652, Rhode Island became the first American colony to pass a law abolishing African slavery; however, the law was apparently never enforced.

In 1863, the Siege of Vicksburg began during the Civil War, ending July 4 with a Union victory.

In 1910, Halley's Comet passed by earth, brushing it with its tail.

In 1927, in America's deadliest school attack, part of a schoolhouse in Bath Township, Michigan, was blown up with explosives planted by local farmer Andrew Kehoe, who then set off a bomb in his truck; the attacks killed 38 children and six adults, including Kehoe, who'd earlier killed his wife. (Authorities said Kehoe, who suffered financial difficulties, was seeking revenge for losing a township clerk election.)

In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a measure creating the Tennessee Valley Authority.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces occupied Monte Cassino in Italy after a four-month struggle with Axis troops.

In 1953, Jacqueline Cochran, 47, became the first woman to break the sound barrier as she piloted a Canadair F-86 Sabre jet over Rogers Dry Lake, California.

In 1973, Harvard law professor Archibald Cox was appointed Watergate special prosecutor by U.S. Attorney General Elliot Richardson.

In 1980, the Mount St. Helens volcano in Washington state exploded, leaving 57 people dead or missing.

In 1981, the New York Native, a gay newspaper, carried a story concerning rumors of “an exotic new disease” among homosexuals; it was the first published report about what came to be known as AIDS.

In 2015, President Barack Obama ended long-running federal transfers of some combat-style gear to local law enforcement in an attempt to ease tensions between police and minority communities, saying equipment made for the battlefield should not be a tool of American criminal justice.

Ten years ago: Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, resigned, saying he wanted to devote all his energy to battling the sexual assault charges he faced in New York. (The charges were later dropped.) The United States slapped sanctions on Syrian President Bashar Assad and six others for human rights abuses over their brutal crackdown on antigovernment protests.

Five years ago: In an unusual move, Republican Donald Trump released a list of 11 potential Supreme Court justices he would consider if elected president (not included was Trump’s eventual first pick for the nation’s highest bench, Neil Gorsuch).

One year ago: President Donald Trump said he’d been taking a malaria drug, hydroxychloroquine, and a zinc supplement to protect against the coronavirus despite warnings from his own government that the drug should be administered only in a hospital or research setting. Moderna announced that an experimental vaccine against the coronavirus showed encouraging results in early testing. The World Health Organization agreed to launch an independent probe into how it managed the international response to the coronavirus. A federal judge in Virginia ruled that a salvage firm could retrieve from the wreckage of the Titanic the Marconi wireless telegraph machine that broadcast distress calls. Ken Osmond, the actor best known for playing teenage scoundrel Eddie Haskell on TV’s “Leave it to Beaver,” died in Los Angeles at 76.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Priscilla Pointer is 97. Actor Robert Morse is 90. Actor Dwayne Hickman is 87. Baseball Hall of Famer Brooks Robinson is 83. Actor Candice Azzara is 80. Bluegrass singer-musician Rodney Dillard (The Dillards) is 79. Baseball Hall of Famer Reggie Jackson is 75. Former Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., is 73. Country singer Joe Bonsall (The Oak Ridge Boys) is 73. Rock musician Rick Wakeman (Yes) is 72. Rock singer Mark Mothersbaugh (Devo) is 71. Actor James Stephens is 70. Country singer George Strait is 69. Actor Chow Yun-Fat is 66. International Tennis Hall of Famer Yannick Noah is 61. Rock singer-musician Page Hamilton is 61. Contemporary Christian musician Barry Graul (MercyMe) is 60. Contemporary Christian singer Michael Tait is 55. Singer-actor Martika is 52. Comedian-writer Tina Fey is 51. Rock singer Jack Johnson is 46. Country singer David Nail is 42. Actor Matt Long is 41. Actor Allen Leech is 40. Christian singer Francesca Battistelli is 36. Actor Spencer Breslin is 29. Actor Violet Beane is 25. Actor Hala Finley is 12.

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.**



Paul Stevens
 Editor, Connecting newsletter
paulstevens46@gmail.com

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