Honoring the Guild's Centenarian

At the age of 100, San Francisco Chronicle reporter Dave Perlman, who makes readers of the San Francisco Chronicle as excited about science as he is, hasn’t really retired. Perlman, who joined the Chronicle nearly eight decades ago as a copy boy, remains the paper’s beloved “science editor emeritus.”

In his career mostly spent covering science, Perlman has written about moon shots, giant tortoises, the AIDS epidemic, earthquakes, climate change, 100-million-year-old ants, evolution, medical breakthroughs and the endangered frogs of Yosemite. With his manual typewriter, and later his laptop computer, Perlman has traveled on assignment to Antarctica, Ethiopia, the Galapagos Islands, China and Cape Canaveral. He has never missed a deadline or written a dull story.

Known as “Dr. Dave” to generations of colleagues, Perlman has won over readers with his enthusiasm, his curiosity, his love of the subject matter and his elegant turns of phrase. He is the longest dues-paying member of the Pacific Media Workers Guild, and TNG/CWA. He was recently presented with a career award pin that had to be specially crafted in order to accommodate his multitudinous years of service.

Perlman started his career at the Schenectady Sunday Sun with a brief stop at the Bismarck, N.D. Capitol, before starting at the San Francisco Chronicle. Perlman left for a tour of duty doing Army PR during World War II, work at the International Herald Tribune and freelancing for Collier’s, Look and Life, publications he outlived by many years. He returned to The Chronicle in 1951 and has been around ever since, covering science, mentoring young science writers and winning awards. Now, science writers compete for the David Perlman Award for Excellence in Science Journalism.

Perlman was awarded his 50-year membership pin by the Guild in 1998. He became science writer emeritus at The Chronicle in August 2017, meaning he writes occasional articles while mostly being retired. He’s been a strong supporter of the Guild.

Resolved: TNG-CWA congratulates Perlman for his remarkable contribution to our craft, celebrates his 79-year career -- most of it at the San Francisco Chronicle -- and cannot wait to read his next story.