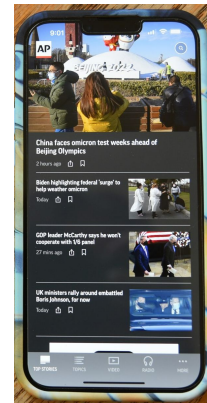


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Connecting

Nov. 28, 2023

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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Nov. 28, 2023,

Journalist casualties in the Israel-Gaza war: As of November 27, the Committee to Protect Journalist's preliminary investigations showed at least 57 journalists and media workers were among the more than 15,000 killed since the war began on October 7—with over 14,000 Palestinian deaths in Gaza and the West Bank and 1,200 deaths in Israel. The deadliest day of the war for journalist deaths was its first day, October 7, with six journalists killed; the second-deadliest day occurred on November 18, with five killed.

KAREN BALL: [Charlie Arbogast](#) – “So sad to hear this news. As a staff photographer with The AP in the early '90s, I was on assignment as the local staffer with no traveling photographer covering Clinton. I was having issues getting to shoot where I needed to be, Karen grabbed the press Secret Service agent and said, ‘This is my photographer and he needs access.’ Enough said. Much love to all who knew her.”

ROLAND PRINZ: [Denis Gray](#) – “I never met Roland Prinz but followed his excellent reporting out of Eastern Europe. As it happens, I will be spending Christmas in Vienna

and will light a candle for him in St. Stephen's Cathedral. May he rest in peace.”

Have a great day – be safe, stay healthy, live it to your fullest.

Paul

Taking new directions

Norm Abelson - Our family lives had just begun to settle down when the phone call came. We had recently purchased our first home, a little cottage at the edge of town. The adoptions of our two sons had become final, and the kids loved wandering the woods circling our back yard. Dina and I liked living in New Hampshire, and had made some fine friends. At age 32, I was happily in my 12th year with The AP.

Simultaneous with all of that, in the recent election of 1962, the usually Republican Granite State, fired up by the Kennedy Revolution, elected a Democratic governor and U. S. Senator. The phone caller said newly elected Sen. Tom McIntyre would like to meet with me, providing no further details. Tom was an amiable guy I had come to know and like through my political reporting; I said I'd be happy to meet with him. At the least, I might get a good interview.

“Well,” said the staffer, “he's going to be at the Dartmouth football game on Saturday, and wants to see you there. There'll be tickets and a note about where he's sitting waiting for you and your wife at the main gate.” I wasn't surprised that McIntyre, a proud Dartmouth grad and booster, was at the game, but it only increased my wondering what the heck was on his mind. And why did my wife need to be at the meeting?

After all the greetings and some football talk, the senator came out with it: he wanted me to go with him to Washington as his press secretary. I was floored, mumbled something about being honored, and asked for a couple of days to think about such a major life change. (I'm not sure, but I think Dartmouth won.)

Back home, Dina and I sat down to discuss the situation.

Reasons to decline the offer: I was part of the best of the best in the journalism world. If I behaved myself, there was the possibility for promotion, a good career and a pension at the end. None of this was assured with McIntyre, who faced re-election every six years. Finally, I wondered, did I want to be transformed from an AP newsman into a political flack?

Reasons to accept the offer: I was a lifelong Democrat, whose longtime dream was to one day be a U.S senator; at least I would be getting close. With Democrats in the White House and ruling Congress, there was the possibility of being involved in major legislative changes for the betterment of the country. But, most compelling, both Dina and I felt it would be exciting to join the thousands of young people across the nation who had come to the capital, wanting to be part of the team with this charismatic leader at the helm.

And so we decided to accept the new challenge. (How could I have known that only a year later I would be standing among a saddened crowd in Arlington National Cemetery, watching the president's coffin being lowered into the ground.)

My time with McIntyre was a good learning experience, not the least of which was no longer asking the tough questions but having to answer them. Also having to write speeches, deal with demanding constituents, working with committees on armed forces and banking – oh, yeah, and at times being an errand boy for the Senator's wife. In sum, it took my life in a new and different direction.

During the next several years, other interesting offers, moving me farther away from journalism, came my way – lobbyist for the National Association of Home Builders, special assistant to the administrator of the Small Business Administration, senior staff of Director Sargent Shriver in President Johnson's War on Poverty. I took them all, and was glad I did. But with Richard Nixon's election. Democrats like me were dumped out in the cold. We returned to New Hampshire, homeless and jobless, but perhaps Fate had taken a hand because, for the remainder of my life, up to the present, I returned largely to my true love, writing.

I started writing Op Eds and features for dailies, had some pieces in magazines, was a commentator on National Public Radio, and wrote three books. Also, I began to teach writing. For a number of years, I taught memoir writing courses I originated at Brandeis University and the University of Southern Maine. Along the way I was a volunteer journalism writing teacher in Maine and New Hampshire elementary schools. One of the classes I was mentoring at Walker School got a personal visit from President Bill Clinton, a known technophobe, for being the first class in the nation to connect to the Internet. We also published a local weekly paper – The Walker Talker - which reached a paid circulation of more than a thousand.

And, finally, to close the circle, I found my way to Connecting, in my opinion, home to the greatest collection of journalists, active and retired, on earth.

3/6 of AP Mod Squad



[Lynn Sherr](#) - Thought you might like this snap of 3/6 of the original Mod Squad after lunch in Manhattan Monday: from left: Jurate Kazickas, Dee Wedemeyer, Lynn Sherr. Lots of gossip more than half a century later, and we dearly missed DC-based Ann Blackman, plus of course the late Ann Garcelon and Dick Blystone.

Former AP Baghdad chiefs



Three former AP Baghdad bureau chiefs - Rebecca Santana, Adam Schreck and Bob Reid - getting together in Washington (Adam took the picture Monday.) Adam is AP's Asia-Pacific regional editor and Rebecca is AP's Homeland Security correspondent in DC.

In face of catastrophe, always something a reporter can do

[Linda Deutsch](#) - I know this is a little late for the actual anniversary of JFK's passing. But thoughts of that day have been haunting me as I watched the coverage. Is it possible that 60 years have passed? I have told this story before but I think it bears repeating.

I was a student at Monmouth College (now Monmouth University) that fateful autumn. Having covered the famous March on Washington the previous August and heard Martin Luther King's historic speech, I was on my way to becoming a journalist, freelancing for the local paper and working on the campus newspaper, "The Outlook."

I was in Shakespeare class when someone stepped in and whispered in the ear of our Professor, Robert Sipos. He turned pale and seemed stunned. He announced that President Kennedy had been shot in Dallas and dismissed class. We stepped into the enormous "Great Hall" of the university where students from other classes were streaming out of classrooms. Many were weeping. Kennedy was our hero.

Few details were available yet, but I knew what we had to do. I surveyed the crowd and gathered three members of the Outlook staff and told them to come with me. We climbed in my tiny car and I drove us to the nearby office of The Asbury Park Press, which knew me as a freelancer. We walked into the newsroom and I told the desk editor we were there to help with whatever they needed. Bells began going off and we stepped into the wire room. We watched a "Flash" clear the wire. President Kennedy was dead.

Everyone sprang into action. Editors put us in charge of telephones, taking calls about cancelled events and scheduled memorials. We carried copy from reporters to editors and handled statements from local officials. It was a day of powerful emotions but they were put aside by staffers who knew this was no time for tears. It was time to do the work that would provide the history of this world-shaking day. They had to put out an "Extra" edition.

I learned many lessons that day. The main one was that in the face of catastrophe, there was always something a reporter could do. We had a purpose that transcended just being a witness. We were the messengers of history. I knew there was no greater calling for me.

A few years later, the AP provided me with the opportunity to pursue this passion with a career that spanned a half century.

Sixty years later, I live in awe of the brave journalists who are putting aside their own pain to cover the world's saddest stories. They are fulfilling the greatest mission of journalism, telling the story. I pray for their safety.

Kennedy and more

[Henry Bradsher](#) - The latest discussion of how people learned of President Kennedy's death brings up memories of learning of other important events.

On the 2017 anniversary of the presidential assassination, I contributed to Connecting how I learned of it from a cable. The foreign desk at 50 Rock cabled the fact of the death – without any details -- to New Delhi, where I was bureau chief. The cable asked for reaction from Prime Minister Nehru and others. I was about to fly to Mongolia for reporting, so that was left in the very capable hands of Rangaswamy Satakopan, the mainstay of the Delhi staff.

My earliest memory of World War II is of newsboys outside my third-grade classroom shouting "extra" about the Nazi German blitzkrieg into the Netherlands, Belgium and France on May 10, 1940.

Remember extras? Before television or the internet or social media, most people got their news from print. Newspaper extras were often the first way that a large part of the public learned of important developments. But does anyone know of extras published in recent decades? Just the mechanics of distributing them in traffic-crowded cities would seem to make them impractical, aside from other complications and the competition of today's multi-varied communications.

A neighboring boy phoned my house on December 7, 1941, to alert us. His family had heard on the radio that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor. That was the "day that will live in infamy", as President Roosevelt told Congress the next day in asking for a declaration of war (a constitutional requirement long since ignored as the U.S. has gone into wars).

When I was throwing 125 afternoon papers on a seven-mile bicycle route on April 12, 1945, a couple of little boys popped out of their house to tell me the radio had just said that President Roosevelt had died. I went home and phoned the newspaper to ask if they would put out an extra. Yes, but finish delivering your usual papers. I did, and then my father drove me to the printing plant to pick up some extras to hawk on the streets.

On August 6, 1945, a friend came to the hospital where I was temporarily to tell me that what he understood to be "an automatic bomb" had been dropped on Japan. He did not know the name Hiroshima.

I was bureau chief in Moscow reading AP's European wire early the morning after April 4, 1968, when I learned of the murder of Martin Luther King Jr., whose 1956 bus boycott I had covered in Montgomery, Alabama.

So many past events to recall as major news, in addition to the Kennedy tragedy.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Joyce Dehli](#)

[Glen Johnson](#)

Jonathan Lemire

Lil Mirando

Stories of interest

Sports Illustrated Published Articles by Fake, AI-Generated Writers (Futurism)

There was nothing in Drew Ortiz's author biography at Sports Illustrated to suggest that he was anything other than human.

"Drew has spent much of his life outdoors, and is excited to guide you through his never-ending list of the best products to keep you from falling to the perils of nature," it read. "Nowadays, there is rarely a weekend that goes by where Drew isn't out camping, hiking, or just back on his parents' farm."

The only problem? Outside of Sports Illustrated, Drew Ortiz doesn't seem to exist. He has no social media presence and no publishing history. And even more strangely, his profile photo on Sports Illustrated is for sale on a website that sells AI-generated headshots, where he's described as "neutral white young-adult male with short brown hair and blue eyes."

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac, Bill Sikes, Richard Chady.

-0-

In Alabama, another small-town paper hit in 'open season' on free press (Washington Post)

By Paul Farhi

ATMORE, Ala. — When Don Fletcher checked the mailbox outside his newspaper's office on Main Street in late September, he found a little gold mine waiting for him.

Folded up inside was a copy of a grand-jury subpoena served on two employees of the local school system. The confidential document indicated that a criminal investigation into potential financial abuse was underway — a solid lead for a veteran reporter like Fletcher.

It took a couple of weeks to confirm, but Fletcher soon broke the news in the weekly Atmore News that officials were probing the Escambia County Board of Education's handling of federal covid-19 relief funds. What happened next, though, lifted Fletcher's story far beyond this town nestled amid cotton fields north of the Florida panhandle.

Days later, the local district attorney ordered the arrest of Fletcher and his boss, Sherry Digmon, the News' publisher and co-owner. He charged both with violating a state law that prohibits the disclosure of grand-jury information — a felony punishable by up to three years in prison.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Myron Belkind, Michael Rubin, Doug Pizac, Dennis Conrad.

-0-

What's Merriam-Webster's word of the year for 2023? Hint: Be true to yourself (AP)

BY LEANNE ITALIE

NEW YORK (AP) — In an age of deepfakes and post-truth, as artificial intelligence rose and Elon Musk turned Twitter into X, the Merriam-Webster word of the year for 2023 is “authentic.”

Authentic cuisine. Authentic voice. Authentic self. Authenticity as artifice. Lookups for the word are routinely heavy on the dictionary company's site but were boosted to new heights throughout the year, editor at large Peter Sokolowski told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview.

“We see in 2023 a kind of crisis of authenticity,” he said ahead of Monday's announcement of this year's word. “What we realize is that when we question authenticity, we value it even more.”

Sokolowski and his team don't delve into the reasons people head for dictionaries and websites in search of specific words. Rather, they chase the data on lookup spikes and world events that correlate. This time around, there was no particularly huge boost at any given time but a constancy to the increased interest in “authentic.”

This was the year of artificial intelligence, for sure, but also a moment when ChatGPT-maker OpenAI suffered a leadership crisis. Taylor Swift and Prince Harry chased after authenticity in their words and deeds. Musk himself, at February's World Government Summit in Dubai, urged the heads of companies, politicians, ministers and other leaders to “speak authentically” on social media by running their own accounts.

Read more [here](#).

-0-

Photographer Who Captured Murder of Lee Harvey Oswald Recalls Turbulent Few Days (PetaPixel)

MATT GROWCOOT

News photographers yearn to capture an iconic image; so when Bob Jackson missed the opportunity to get a photo of President John F. Kennedy's assassination because there was no film in his camera — perhaps he thought he had missed his golden opportunity.

However, just a few days later, Jackson would capture one of the most recognizable images of the 20th century with a photo that would also earn him the Pulitzer Prize for photography: The assassination of Lee Harvey Oswald — the man who killed JFK.

Jackson, who in 1963 was a photographer for the Dallas Times Herald, tells 9NEWS that he was “fired up” that weekend to do a good job on the big event of the President's visit to Texas 60 years ago.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac.

-0-

Your Local Newspaper Might Not Have a Single Reporter (Wall Street Journal)

By Alexandra Bruell

The Gleaner, the local newspaper in Henderson, Ky., has sections focused on features, sports, news and opinion.

What it doesn't have: a single reporter on staff.

The publication is one of the “ghost newsrooms” that increasingly dot the American media landscape—newspapers that have little to no on-the-ground presence in the localities whose name they bear. It is a sobering development in an industry that has been brought to its knees by the rise of digital media and large technology companies.

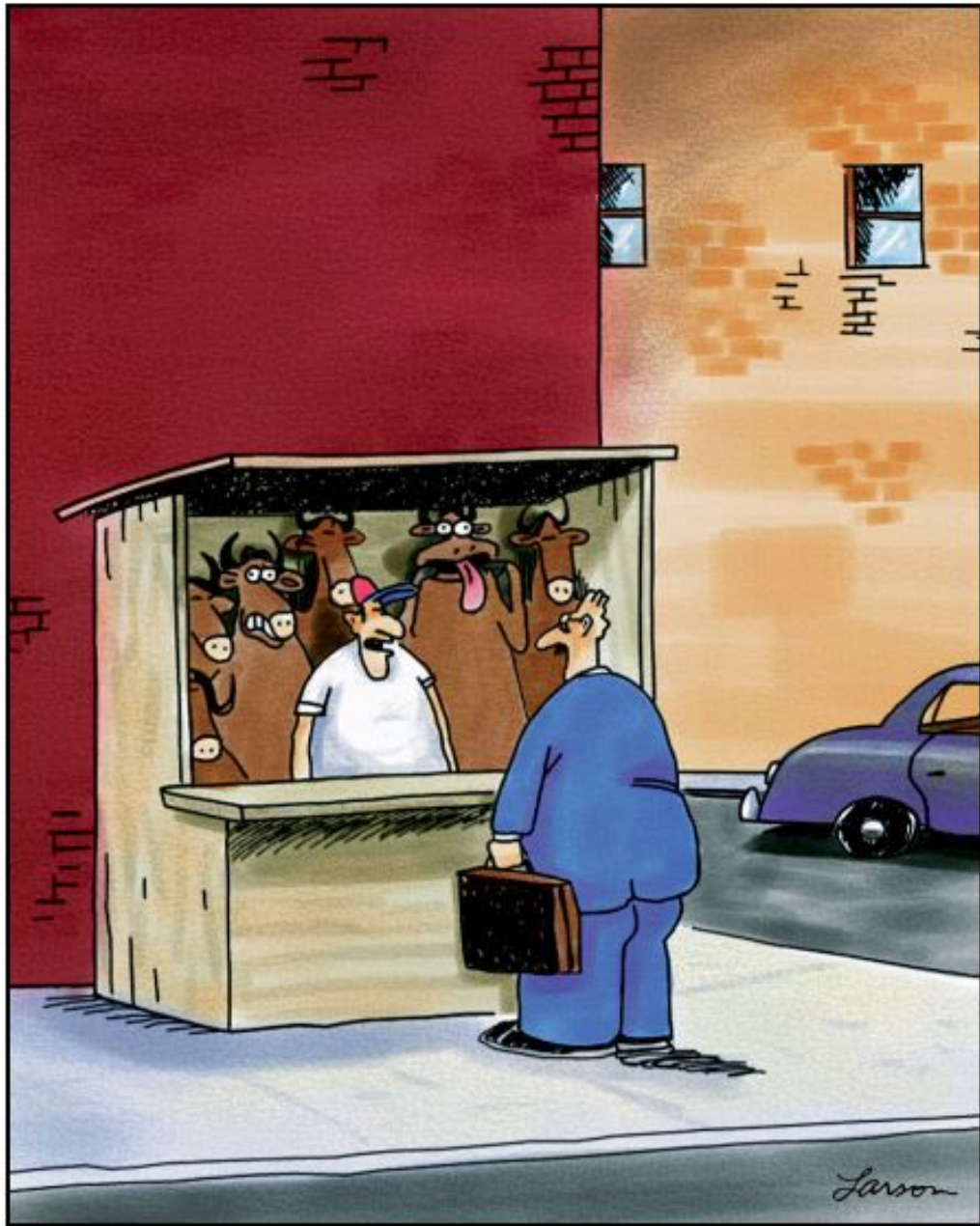
The Gleaner newsroom once bustled with a staff of around 20. Now, it doesn't have an office—it was closed a few years ago—and most of its content comes from other publications owned by its parent company: Gannett, home of USA Today and over 200 local news outlets including the Courier & Press of nearby Evansville, Ind.

What coverage there is of Henderson, a northwestern Kentucky city of about 30,000, is left to a few freelancers—including a husband-and-wife team that averages a few stories a month for the Gleaner, which publishes five days a week.

Dozens of newspapers across the country don't have a single full-time reporter dedicated to that publication, according to a Wall Street Journal analysis and industry observers.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

The Final Word



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“Well, I’ve got good gnus and I’ve got bad gnus.”

Shared by Neal Ulevich

Today in History - Nov. 28, 2023



Today is Tuesday, Nov. 28, the 332nd day of 2023. There are 33 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 28, 1942, fire engulfed the Coconut Grove nightclub in Boston, killing 492 people in the deadliest nightclub blaze ever. (The cause of the rapidly spreading fire, which began in the basement, is in dispute; one theory is that a busboy accidentally ignited an artificial palm tree while using a lighted match to fix a light bulb.)

On this date:

In 1520, Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan reached the Pacific Ocean after passing through the South American strait that now bears his name.

In 1919, American-born Lady Astor was elected the first female member of the British Parliament.

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Josef Stalin began conferring in Tehran during World War II.

In 1961, Ernie Davis of Syracuse University became the first Black college football player to be named winner of the Heisman Trophy.

In 1964, the United States launched the space probe Mariner 4 on a course toward Mars, which it flew past in July 1965, sending back pictures of the red planet.

In 1979, an Air New Zealand DC-10 bound for the South Pole crashed into a mountain in Antarctica, killing all 257 people aboard.

In 1990, Margaret Thatcher resigned as British prime minister during an audience with Queen Elizabeth II, who then conferred the premiership on John Major.

In 1994, serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer was killed in a Wisconsin prison by a fellow inmate.

In 2001, Enron Corp., once the world's largest energy trader, collapsed after would-be rescuer Dynegy Inc. backed out of an \$8.4 billion takeover deal. (Enron filed for bankruptcy protection four days later.)

In 2016, the first commercial flight from the United States to Havana in more than 50 years arrived in Cuba as the island began week-long memorial services for Fidel Castro.

In 2018, Democrats overwhelmingly nominated Nancy Pelosi to become House speaker.

In 2020, Pennsylvania's highest court threw out a lower court's order preventing the state from certifying dozens of contests on its Nov. 3 election ballot; it was the latest lawsuit filed by Republicans attempting to undo President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the battleground state.

In 2021, Lee Elder, who broke down racial barriers as the first Black golfer to play in the Masters, died in Escondido, California at age 87.

In 2022, Payton Gendron, a white gunman who massacred 10 Black people at a Buffalo supermarket, pleaded guilty to murder and hate-motivated terrorism charges in an agreement that gave him life in prison without parole.

Today's Birthdays: Recording executive Berry Gordy Jr. is 94. Former Democratic Sen. Gary Hart of Colorado is 87. Former U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross is 86. Singer-songwriter Bruce Channel is 83. Singer Randy Newman is 80. CBS News correspondent Susan Spencer is 77. Movie director Joe Dante is 76. Former "Late Show" orchestra leader Paul Shaffer is 74. Actor Ed Harris is 73. Former NASA astronaut Barbara Morgan is 72. Actor S. Epatha (eh-PAY'-thah) Merkerson is 71. Former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff is 70. Country singer Kristine Arnold (Sweethearts of the Rodeo) is 67. Actor Judd Nelson is 64. Movie director Alfonso Cuarón (kwahr-OHN') is 62. Rock musician Matt Cameron is 61. Actor Jane Sibbett is 61. Comedian and talk show host Jon Stewart is 61. Actor Garcelle Beauvais (gar-SEHL' boh-VAY') is 57. Actor/comedian Stephnie Weir is 56. R&B singer Dawn Robinson is 55. Actor Gina Tognoni is 50. Hip-hop musician apl.de.ap (Black Eyed Peas) is 49. Actor Malcolm Goodwin is 48. Actor Ryan Kwanten is 47. Actor Aimee Garcia is 45. Rapper Chamillionaire is 44. Actor Daniel Henney is 44. Rock musician Rostam Batmanglij (baht-man-GLEESH') is 40. Rock singer-keyboardist Tyler Glenn (Neon Trees) is 40. Actor Mary Elizabeth Winstead is 39. R&B singer Trey Songz is 39. NHL goalie Marc-Andre Fleury (marhk-ahn-dray FLOOR'-ee) is 39. Actor Scarlett Pomers is 35. Actor-rapper Bryshere Gray is 30.

Got a story or photos to share?

Connecting is a daily newsletter published Monday through Friday that reaches more than 1,800 retired and former Associated Press employees, present-day employees, and news industry and journalism school colleagues. It began in 2013. Past issues can be found by clicking Connecting Archive in the masthead. Its author, Paul Stevens, retired from the AP in 2009 after a 36-year career as a newsman in Albany and St. Louis, correspondent in Wichita, chief of bureau in Albuquerque, Indianapolis and Kansas City, and Central Region vice president based in Kansas City.

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:

- **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.

- **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?

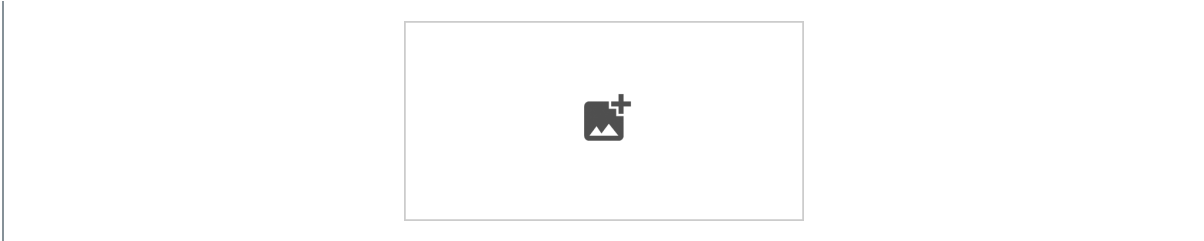
- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

Paul Stevens

Editor, Connecting newsletter

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