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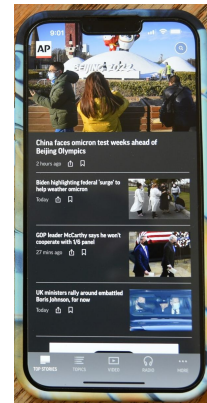
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Connecting

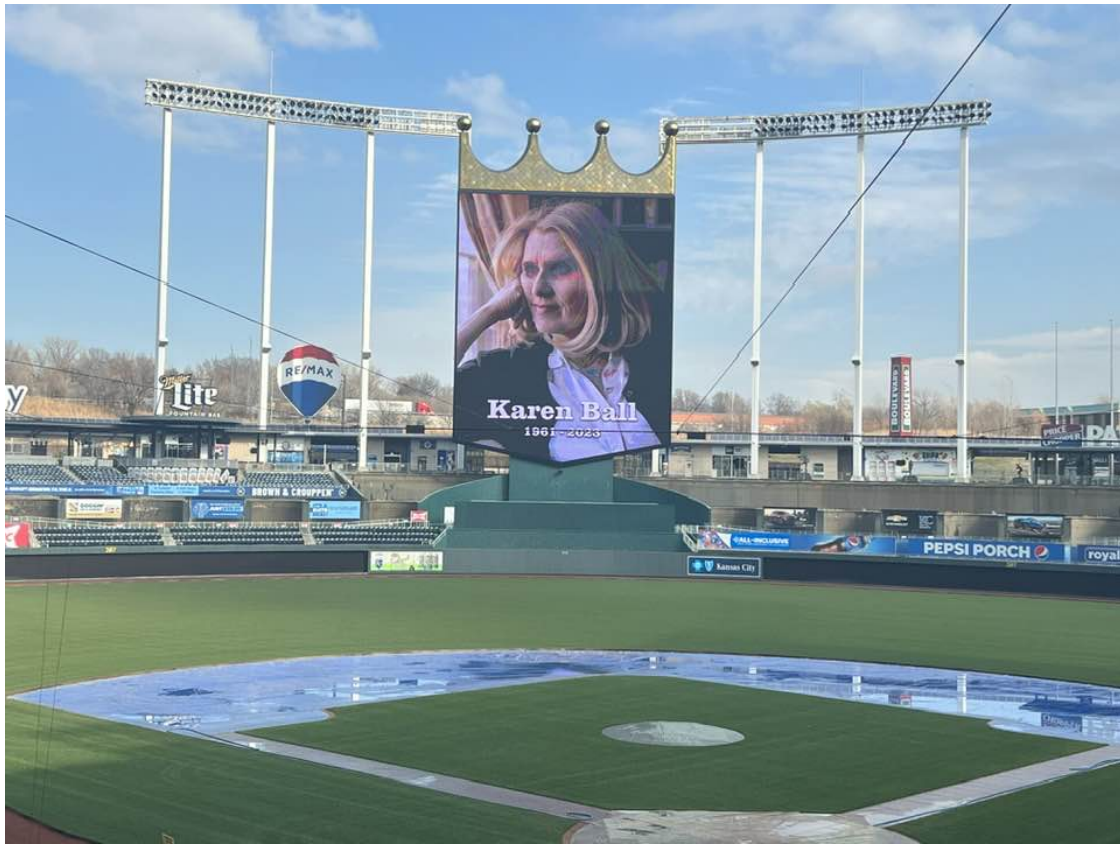
Dec. 11, 2023

Click [here](#) for sound of the Teletype



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Photo/Paul Stevens

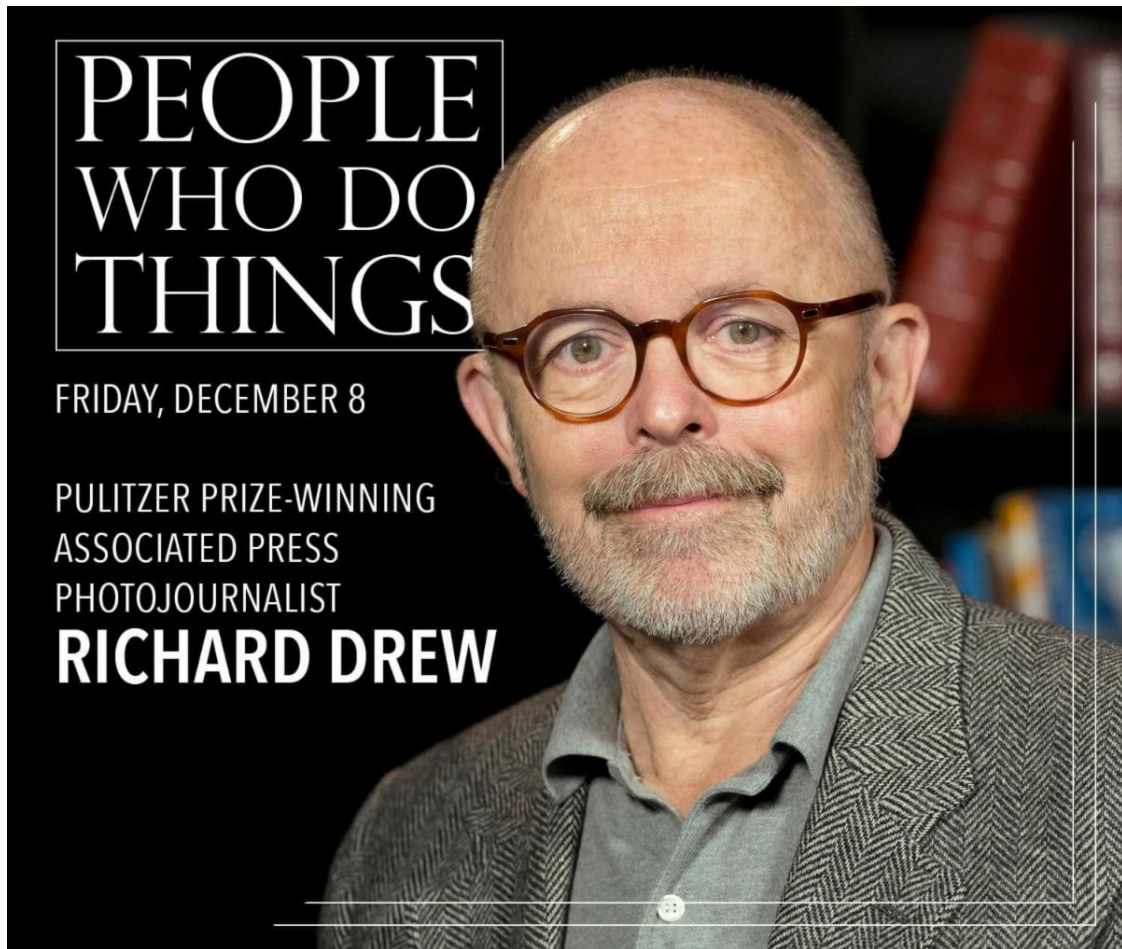
Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this Dec. 11, 2023,

The family and many friends of **Karen Ball** gathered Friday at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City to honor her 62 years on this earth.

She excelled as a journalist with the Associated Press (Jefferson City, Kansas City, Washington) and as White House correspondent for the NY Daily News. A beautiful ceremony for a brave, inspiring woman. And an appropriate setting for the memorial: she was a loyal Kansas City Royals fan. [She died](#) Nov. 24 at the age of 62.

Charitable donations can be made to an endowed scholarship in Karen's name to support students in financial need with proven hard reporting skills. Click [here](#). Checks made payable to the University of Missouri should be sent to: Office of Advancement, Missouri School of Journalism, 103 Neff Hall, Columbia, MO 65211. Please note that your gift is for the Karen Ball Journalism Scholarship.



Our colleague [Richard Drew](#) was featured Friday in an Apple Podcasts Preview titled People Who Do Things: "Laura and John welcome Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist Richard Drew to the podcast. Richard has been an Associated Press photographer for more than fifty years and has been front row to many historic events, from the assassination of Robert Kennedy at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, to the fall of the towers on 9/11. He is known for his image Falling Man from 9/11." Click [here](#).

Here's to a great week ahead – be safe, stay healthy, live each day to your fullest.

Paul

AI photos not a problem, says Google – but...Do you really have nothing to fear?



Our colleague [Doug Pizac](#) shared [this story](#) from PetaPixel: “Amazon Says Its New AI Image Generator Won’t Hurt Photography”, accompanied by the above photo – and comments:

There’s been a lot of stories and discussion on how artificial intelligence ranges from the best thing since sliced bread to the extinction of reporters and photographers. Most of the them have centered around words -- the latest being the turmoil surrounding Sports Illustrated. But now AI’s abilities are being openly trained on imagery as a new method of photography. On television you probably have seen ads for a new cell phone camera where if you shoot a picture of a person jumping in the air you can grab the person and move him/her higher in the sky that would make Michael Jordan envious.

Amazon has now created a new AI image generator called Titan where people and companies can take their own lower quality pictures and have the generator swap out backgrounds, settings and even add/subtract visual items with remarkable accuracy. It can also produce entirely original images.

Amazon, of course, “...says photographers have nothing to fear...”.

Personally and professionally, I believe that every AI-generated or enhanced photograph should be clearly tagged that can be easily seen/found saying the image has been AI modified whether it is complete fake or slightly manipulated. And all images that are distributed from PR handouts to licensing companies to postings on social networks need to be marked so when they are put before the public the public knows the sourcing and if they are real or not. In other words, full accountability.

Probably the easiest method would to ban the use of calling any AI created or manipulated imagery a “photo” and instead use the word “illustration” -- or “digital illustration” to be more exact. If not, then our beliefs, professionalism, careers, industry, CREDIBILITY, trust, etc., will be heading toward extinction.

I would like to hear feedback from current and former AP photographers, editors, etc. on your thoughts. And be sure to take a close look at the opening image in the story

showing an AI-generated image of an iguana at what can be done now without your decades-long learned skills. Do you really have nothing to fear?

New-member profile: Robert Friedman

Robert Friedman - My AP days from 1987 to 1995 were the most productive of my 40-year career. I assembled a team that rebuilt AP's entire set of news gathering and delivery applications, and introduced a couple of important new ones as well. I started with College Football and Basketball Schedules, Scores, and Standards. I then moved to revamping AP's weather gathering and delivery applications, and in 1988 began the replacement of the four systems that comprised AP's worldwide news delivery network at the time (Mouse, IMOS, Atex, and Broadcast). That project would finish in 1994.



In 1988, I also wrote a primary delegate tracking program, which saw some front-page coverage in the NY Times. In 1991, I assembled a team of superb developers under Lillian Toll (Dave Stonehill, Joe Cappelleri, Sally Goldman, Dave Anderson, and Bruce Toll), and by November 1992, we had a flawless night covering all state and national races (as I believe we have had ever since).

In 1993, Dave Anderson and I co-developed an interesting side application called AP InTouch, which did a stint in DC's Newseum. In 1994, Joe Cappelleri built the Company Name Finder application. In 1995, under Dave Stonehill's leadership, we introduced Grand Central Stocks, and with it a more flexible approach to supplying Markets data to our members., In 1996 Bruce Toll led the completion of the AP's first inhouse archive system, a project I launched in 1995. And finally in 1997, after I had brought Tony Rentschler onto the team, he developed from scratch a Windows-based version of APEdit to complete the replacement of all news gathering and delivery systems that had been in place in 1987.

For the past nine years, I have been working as a Product Manager (someone who comes up with the specs for how a piece of software should function) for Cox Automotive. In a blatant networking pitch, I'd be open to learning about other Product Manager opportunities if anyone knows of them.

AP Sighting



Margaret Callahan - I spotted AP Creations this past Saturday at our town's Candy Cane Lane Christmas Market hosted by the Dainty Chic Roadside Stand, in Bowling Green, Va. Ambrosia Pauley of AP Creations was one of 35 area vendors at the last open-air market until Spring 2024. AP Creations offers one of a kind, no two the same, flannel shirts that were in a distressed, tattered or torn state and fixes the issues with unique fabric patching. (Selfie in morning shadow form shows as well.)

BEST OF THE WEEK — FIRST WINNER

Investigation uncovers private school selling diplomas, no classes required



In a package featuring multiple scoops and exclusives, an AP team investigating Louisiana's rise in unapproved private schools stumbled on a school selling diplomas to anyone whose parents said they had completed their education — even years later — a revelation that rocked the state and reverberated across the nation.

Following AP's groundbreaking Missing Students analysis that showed that Louisiana stood out for its intense disengagement from public schooling and its unusually permissive category of unapproved private schools, education data reporter Sharon Lurye partnered with Charles Lussier of The (Louisiana) Advocate to investigate.

Under state law, any adult can set up a school by simply declaring the number of students enrolled. There are no requirements to prove a child is getting an education or even say which kids attend.

Read more [here](#).

BEST OF THE WEEK — SECOND WINNER

Exclusive reporting on indigenous women bringing a tiny tribe back from the brink of extinction in the Amazon



The AP exclusively told the story of what happened when three Indigenous Brazilian sisters decided to buck the patrilineal system and refused to let their tribe die out by marrying outside of their tribe. Having their spouses live on their ancestral land protected it from deforestation, and made them members of their tribe.

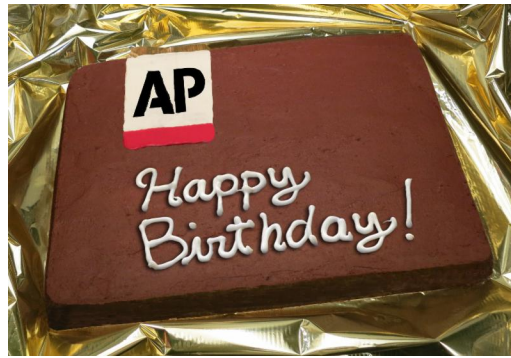
Thanks to AP climate reporter Fabiano Maisonave's unmatched contacts in the Brazilian Amazon, a region he's covered extensively for years, the AP secured unique access to the remote and rarely covered Juma Indigenous territory.

An all-format crew comprised of Maisonave, Climate video editor Teresa de Miguel from Mexico City and Sao Paulo photographer André Penner first flew to Porto Velho, then then drove for hours along dirt roads, then took a two-hour boat ride to finally make it to the community. Sleeping in hammocks, the AP crew shadowed the Juma people for three days, joining them on their fishing trips, documenting their traditional way of grinding cassava flour and sharing freshly caught fish cooked on a bonfire under the starry sky.

De Miguel's lens trained on the women encouraged them to discuss how they were treated as they became the first female chiefs in their region of the Amazon, with Maisonave interpreting Portuguese.

Read more [here](#).

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Daryl Beall

Stories of interest

AI 101. ChatGPT: A year of transforming our lives (Editor and Publisher)

Guy Tasaka | for Editor & Publisher

In celebrating the first anniversary of ChatGPT on Nov. 30, it's remarkable to consider how this "modern" artificial intelligence, better known as ChatGPT, has evolved from a niche tool into a global phenomenon. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been around since the 1950s, but it was once the realm of a few with access to significant computing power, storage and programming skills. What used to be known as predictive analytics and machine learning has now entered the mainstream, thanks to ChatGPT.

While virtually everyone has heard of ChatGPT, how many know what it is? Or is it one of those nebulous ideas everyone talks about but few have known or used? Or maybe it's a technology or category that is moving so fast that you just don't know what you don't know or struggle to figure out where to start. I hope this article will shed more light on it. More importantly, I will remind you that it's the most transformative technology since the introduction of the internet, but it's evolving 100 times faster.

ChatGPT: The web browser of AI

The introduction of ChatGPT is akin to the birth of the internet, or more precisely, the advent of the web browser. Before web browsers, the internet was used mainly by developers and academics. Similarly, ChatGPT has turned AI into a tool for everyone, making it as accessible and revolutionary as the web browser was in its time.

Read more [here](#).

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Opinion | Elon Musk and X welcome back conspiracy theorist Alex Jones (Poynter)

By: Tom Jones

Alex Jones, the Infowars founder and conspiracy theorist who, among other outrageous claims, repeatedly called the 2013 mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary a hoax, is back on X — the platform formerly known as Twitter.

Yes, you read that right. The man who once claimed the murder of children in a mass shooting was “staged” and as “phony as a \$3 bill” is allowed back on X.

Chief twit Elon Musk restored Jones’ account after he ran an online poll on Saturday asking users if Jones’ account — which was permanently banned in 2018, well before Musk bought the social media site — should be restored. Musk wrote on X, “Reinstate Alex Jones on this platform? Vox Populi, Vox Dei.”

“Vox Populi, Vox Dei” is Latin for “the voice of the people is the voice of God.”

According to the X poll, 1.96 million people responded, with 70% saying Jones’ account should be restored. Musk then wrote, “The people have spoken and so it shall be.”

Read more [here](#).

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There’s No Stopping the Newspaper Death Spiral

(Politico)

By JACK SHAFER

About 750 members of the Washington Post Guild staged a one-day strike against the paper on Thursday to publicize their position that management is not bargaining with them in good faith. Staffers who picketed were joined by Scabby the Rat, and many Post reporters withheld their bylines from the paper’s Thursday and Friday editions in protest.

The mini-strikers may not have imagined that their direct action would force the Jeff Bezos-owned paper to submit to their demands. Few, if any, subscribers will notice or care that bylines were withheld, nor will many be moved by the fact that the Friday edition seemed fattened with what appeared to be staff stories that had been banked. The true purpose of such public protests is to unite workers behind the cause, drum up sympathy with the public and give management the hotfoot.

By that measure, the walkout was a short-term success. But what about the long term?

News unions have expanded their footprints in the last couple of years, organizing longtime holdouts like the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune and a dozen Gannett newsrooms, as well as most top news websites and magazines (Slate, Vice, HuffPost, POLITICO, The Atlantic, Esquire, The New Yorker, New York, Washingtonian, et al.). But

the successes can't mask the newspaper industry's death spiral. Post workers may well win a new contract, secure desired workplace enhancements and collect raises if they keep at it. But the victory may prove Pyrrhic as the newspaper industry's dim and dark present unfolds into its future.

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

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Reuters, New York Times Top List of Fossil Fuel Industry's Favorite Media Partners (Drilled)

Amy Westervelt and Matthew Green

This story was co-reported with DeSmog and co-published by The Intercept and The Nation.

As she begins a recent episode of the podcast "Powered By How," award-winning journalist Nisha Pillai talks about the difficulty of scaling innovation, then introduces her guests: a business psychologist, a renewable energy investor, and the head of an innovation lab. The guests go on to describe the complexities of climate change, the challenges to scaling any sort of technology, and what's needed to engineer real solutions.

It sounds like any other business or energy podcast, but each episode in this eight-part series is actually an ad. The casual listener could easily miss the first 5 seconds, set to jangly, stereotypically podcast-y music, when Pillai, a former BBC World News presenter whose voice instills instant confidence, announces that this is a podcast from Reuters Plus in partnership with Saudi Aramco.

Pillai never explains that Reuters Plus is the internal ad studio at Reuters, not part of the newsroom. Nor does she remind listeners of the show's sponsor when the head of the innovation lab, an Aramco executive, trots out the fossil fuel industry's favorite line on climate: "We need to have collective action from all: government, industry, the developer of the technologies and the end consumer."

Reuters is one of at least seven major news outlets whose internal brand studio creates and publishes misleading promotional content for fossil fuel companies, according to a new report released today. Known as advertorials or native advertising, the sponsored material is created to look like a publication's authentic editorial work, lending a veneer of journalistic credibility to the fossil fuel industry's key climate talking points.

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

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Newspaper publisher found guilty of political advertisement omissions (AP)

By KATHY McCORMACK
Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. — A judge has found the New Hampshire publisher of a weekly community newspaper guilty of five misdemeanor charges that she ran advertisements for local races without properly marking them as political advertising.

The judge acquitted Debra Paul, publisher of the Londonderry Times, of a sixth misdemeanor charge on Thursday following a bench trial in November. She is scheduled to be sentenced on Dec. 20.

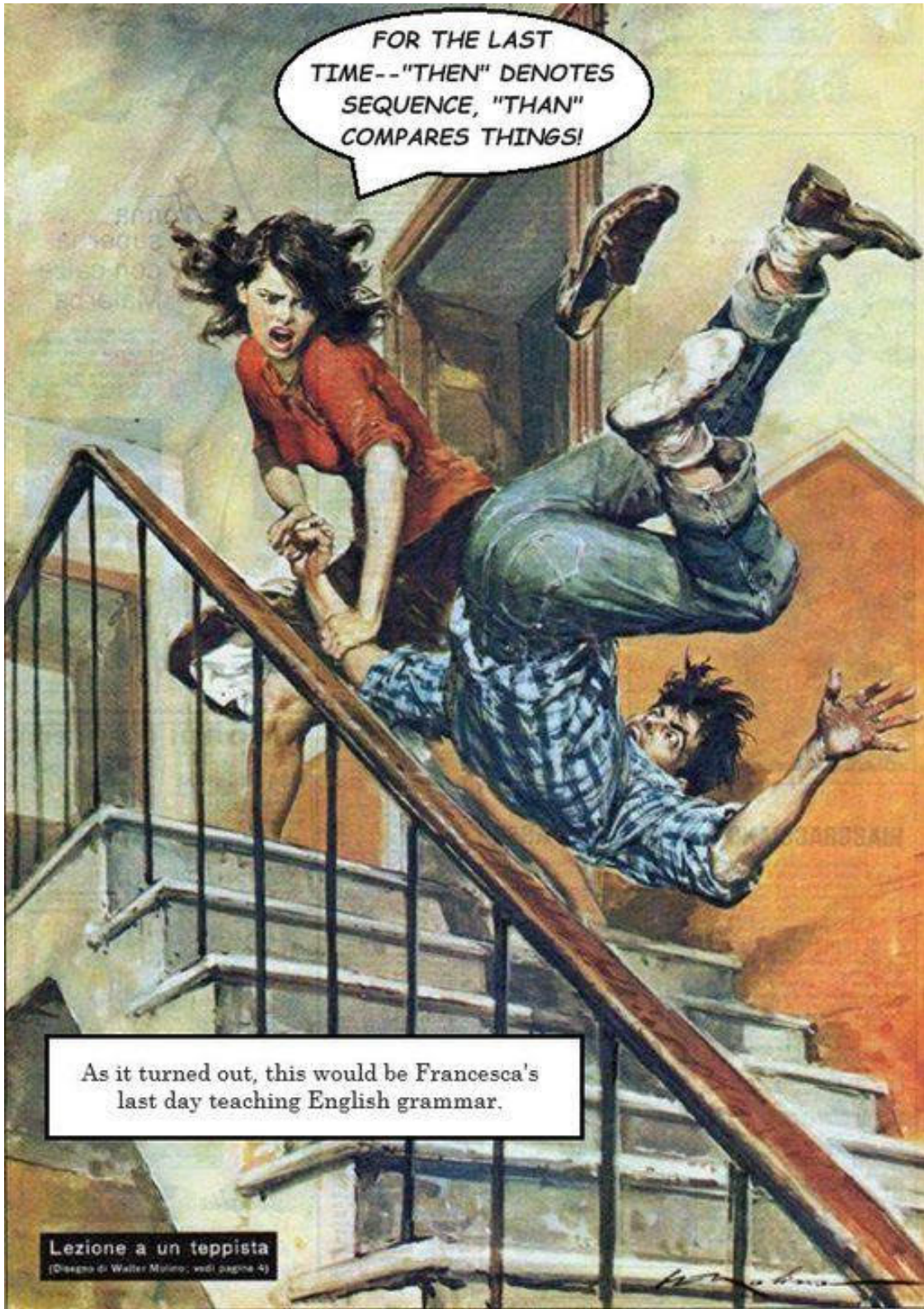
Each charge carries a maximum penalty of up to a year in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

The New Hampshire attorney general's office charged Paul last year, saying she failed to identify the ads with "appropriate language" indicating that they were ads and saying who paid for them as required by state law.

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

The Final Word

Grammar in art



Shared by Reed Saxon

Today in History - Dec. 11, 2023



Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for? (Audience) Why should they care? (Benefit) What do I want them to do here? (Call-to-Action)

Create a great offer by adding words like "free" "personalized" "complimentary" or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take an action, so think about inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining"!

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!

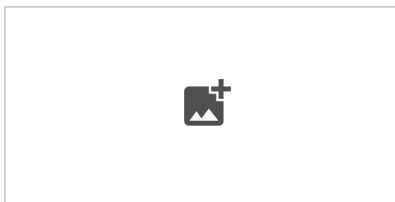
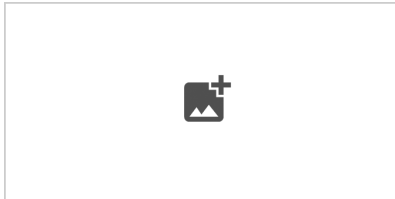
Here are some suggestions:

- **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
paulstevens46@gmail.com



Connecting newsletter | 14719 W 79th Ter, Lenexa, KS 66215

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