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O'Dwyer's

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NYS PONIES UP \$200K FOR HORSE RACING PR

The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund is ponying up \$200K for an equine marketing and harness racing PR campaign.



Founded in 1965, the Fund's mission is to promote agriculture in the Empire State through the breeding of standardbred horses.

To achieve that goal, the Fund oversees the New York Sire Stakes, which is the nation's oldest harness racing program, to stimulate the breeding/buying/selling of horses.

The Fund wants a partner to promote the Sire Stakes races that take place at harness tracks in Yonkers, Saratoga, Monticello, Goshen, Buffalo, Tioga and Batavia, along with county fair races and the Excelsior Racing series set for the fall.

The firm will handle marketing communications, advertising, social media and event management ("Night of Champions" celebrations, awards banquet).

It will also promote one-day horse shows slated for Goshen and Morrisville, plus a five-day extravaganza in Harrisburg, PA.

Proposals are due July 27.

They go to: Ronald Ochrym; Acting Executive Director; Agriculture & NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund; One Broadway Center; Schenectady, NY 12305.

[Read the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

EX-CLINTON SPOKESPERSON JOINS LEVINSON

Matt McKenna, who was spokesperson for president Bill Clinton, has joined [The Levinson Group](#) as a senior advisor.

From 2007 to 2015, McKenna handled communications, media, PR and reputation management for the Clinton family, Clinton Foundation and Clinton Global Initiative.

He also got involved in the preparation of Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign.

McKenna exited the Clinton job for the head of North American communications for Uber.

He went on to co-found the

Greenbrier boutique PR firm that is part of the Messina Group.

Molly Levinson launched TLG in 2013.



Matt McKenna

KOBRE + KIM REPS RUSSIAN OLIGARCH

Kobre & Kim has agreed to advise Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich on judicial and administrative proceedings.

Abramovich has been sanctioned by the UK and European Union for his cozy ties with Russia strongman Vladimir Putin.

At the request of Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelensky, the US did not sanction the billionaire.

American officials did issue a warrant in June to seize Abramovich's Boeing 787 Dreamliner and Gulfstream jet because they flew to Russia.

In its federal filing, K&K notes that Abramovich is acting as a mediator in the peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine. Both countries approved of his role as mediator.

Abramovich "has been heavily involved in advocating for, and coordinating the establishment of humanitarian corridors and other humanitarian rescue missions," the filing notes.

K+K's registration statement says Abramovich is a citizen of Russia, Israel and Portugal.

He chairs the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia and serves as a trustee of the Moscow Jewish Museum.

During the past 15 years, Abramovich has donated more than \$500M to Jewish causes throughout the world.



Roman Abramovich

PRAYTELL FLIES AIR NEW ZEALAND

Air New Zealand, which will kick off its first non-stop flight from New York to Auckland on September 17, has hired Praytell to handle the brand's earned-first strategy and media relations campaign.

The shop will launch a consumer activation push tied to the inaugural flight.

Air New Zealand will operate the New York JFK International to Auckland International Airport three times a week.

It is one of the longest routes in the world: 17 and a half hours southbound and 16 hours northbound.

Air New Zealand resumed US service, which had been suspended due to COVID-19, in March with flights from Auckland to Los Angeles.

San Francisco service kicked off in April. Honolulu and Houston flights began again this month.

Praytell has generated buzz for Air New Zealand's new Skynest, sleep pod lie-flat beds for economy passengers.



AIR NEW ZEALAND

WH COMMS CHIEF KATE BEDINGFIELD TO EXIT

White House communications director Kate Bedingfield is exiting later this month. According to a briefing from the White House, she is leaving to spend more time with her husband and children.



Kate Bedingfield

Before heading up the Biden administration's communications department, Bedingfield served as deputy campaign manager and communications director for the President's 2020 campaign. She also worked with Biden in Obama's White House as deputy director of media affairs and director of response.

She previously worked at the Motion Picture Association of America, where she was the vice president of corporate communications. In addition, Bedingfield served as spokeswoman for John Edwards' 2008 presidential campaign, and communications director for Sen. Jeanne Shaheen's 2008 Senate campaign in New Hampshire.

Bedingfield's departure follows that of former press secretary Jen Psaki in May. Psaki was succeeded by Karine Jean-Pierre.

UNIV. COLLEGE DUBLIN TO ENROLL PR FIRM

University College Dublin's professional academy, Ireland's top workforce upskilling program, is looking for a partner to provide PR and communications services.



It offers 42 professional diplomas and certificates. Courses are tailored to suit the learner's terms and may be taken on-demand, live, online or in-classroom.

The selected firm will work in the areas of brand/reputation management, media relations, digital consulting and stakeholder outreach.

The Academy plans to award a one-year contract. It will retain the option to renew for an additional three one-year terms.

Proposals are due July 18.

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

NOVARTIS' MARINO MOVES TO PACIRA BIO

Sara Ghazaii Marino, who was associate director of global communications for Novartis, has joined Pacira Biosciences as executive director of corporate communications.



Sara Ghazaii Marino

Tampa-based Pacira is a leader in non-opioid pain management. It established a partnership in June with the National Safety Council to promote the Connect2Prevent employee-family education program to increase awareness and prevention of opioid addiction.

Prior to joining Novartis, Marino was VP-corporate communications and marketing at MWWPR, which is now [MikeWorldWide](#).

She also was VP-director of communications at the PR Council and New York Genome Center.

Pacira, which trades on the NASDAQ, earned \$6.8M on \$158M Q1 revenues.

NEWS OF FIRMS

DMPR acquires the PR agency arm of **Super Connector Media**, an online education & training company. The two agencies have collaborated over the past 12 months on projects for public relations clients in multiple categories and referred business in both directions. DMPR will only acquire Super Connector Media's PR agency business and no executives from the company will be joining the DMPR team. Super Connector Media will maintain an internal communications & PR team that will work with its online education, coaching and book launch clients. "We have known and admired Super Connector Media for many years and have been impressed by both the caliber of clients and the results they've generated for them," said DMPR founder and CEO Dalyn A. Miller.

Enero Group Limited is expanding the [Hotwire Group](#) with the acquisition of global B2B digital marketing agency **ROI DNA** and **GetIT**, a B2B tech-focused marketing firm that works in the APAC region. ROI DNA will operate as ROI DNA, a Hotwire Company. Matt Quirie, ROI DNA chief executive officer, and the agency's leadership team will continue in their current roles.

GetIT will operate as GetIT, a Hotwire Company, with GetIT CEO Anol Bhattacharya and its leadership team also continuing in their current roles. With the addition of the two firms, the Hotwire Group's combined team will consist of more than 500 employees and 14 offices around the world.

V2 adds a suite of sponsored content services to its content practice. The six new content service offerings include: expert councils (invitation-only, industry-centric executive groups focused on elevating thought leadership), influencer content creation, native advertising, newsletters & podcasts, paid editorial and video-based storytelling. To support existing and new client accounts as well as the service enhancements, the agency has promoted Megan Nealon, Nicole Metro and Jillian Young to vice president.

[Sage Communications](#) forms an alliance with federal management consultancy **Deep Water Point** to provide marketing and professional services to businesses supporting the federal government. Deep Water Point's team of more than 300 former senior-level agency and industry leaders works to guide clients to the right opportunities for their capabilities. "Our new alliance with Deep Water Point brings together our team's ability to foster a more welcoming and informed federal market with Deep Water Point's knowledge and experience from the perspective of federal agencies and government contractors," said Sage co-founder and CEO David Gorodetski.

Millennium Communications is being acquired by agency investment and advisory group **Unite Digital**. Millennium co-founders Pat and Theresa Macri will be retiring from the business after a transition period. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed. "Millennium is the cornerstone for our business model—an agency that can act as the standard for other acquisitions, provide strategic and creative leadership, and build on its own success with added resources from Unite Digital. This is a tremendous opportunity for the teams at both organizations," said Unite Digital CEO Shane Perkins.



SUBSTACK LAYOFFS: THE PERIL OF HYPE

On June 29, Substack [laid off 14 percent of its staff](#). This is at a time, documents [Challenger, Gray & Christinas](#), of ongoing reductions-in-force in all media. Also, myriad startups such as Substack are facing financial challenges since [venture capital is drying up](#).



Jane Genova

The Substack layoff story could have been covered by the media as simply an example of the tech media business navigating the new usual. Instead, it was configured as a possible signal that Substack could be in game-changing financial distress. But Substack's woes are, at least in part, a result of the hype associated with the platform. There is a downside to leveraging hype as a tool for promotion.

In 2017, the Chris Best team launched Substack. On its turnkey platform, writers can sell their content on a direct-to-consumer basis. The transaction fee paid to Substack is 10 percent of revenue, with a processing fee of three percent to payment processor Stripe. Substack hailed this as ["a better future for news."](#) Others declared it as ["the media future."](#) In an early sign of success the platform signed up writers ranging from Glenn Greenwald to Salman Rushdie.

One reality is that Substack essentially represents a natural progression in digital platforms for writers. Another is this: There is more required than just posting content. Marketing is a necessity for financial success on Substack, and what marketing entails might not be fully understood by many writers.

But those problems are the tip of the iceberg in Substack's ability to survive. The bigger ones are these: How media will present its ongoing situation and the effects of that on its revenue sources—and later, when fundraising bounces back, potential investors.

On the one hand, Substack declares it is in good shape. And, yes, things do look that way. It earned revenue of \$9 million in 2021. During funding rounds it had been valued at least at \$650 million.

On the other hand, its buzzy branding, created in part by sustained hype, makes it a target for negative media coverage. Negative coverage about what it has to deal with to survive can itself set in play a lot of trouble. Both writers and readers can abandon the platform.

So here Substack is. Of course, promotion is necessary. The risk is that it can evolve into hype. The consequences of hype can be severe. Along with making the entity a sitting duck for media to swoop in at the first sign of trouble, there is this: locking the business into the hype.

What could Substack have done differently? Rather than putting itself out there with hype or encouraging it in any way, Substack might have stuck to the facts. Those would constitute the benefits for writers, readers, and communications in general. As a result, it would not have opened itself to the syndrome of Great Expectations Dashed, a media frenzy, and potential unnecessary damage to the brand and the business.

Hype, like controversy and the use of humor, is a wild card.

Jane Genova (janegenova374@gmail.com) creates marketing communications for professional services, industrial trades, and tech. A client observed, "She makes shipping containers 'sexy.'"

ON THE MOVE

FNK IR, an investor relations consultancy specializing in smaller public companies, hires **Robert Meyers** as VP of investor relations & capital markets. Meyers joins FNK IR from BNY Mellon, where he served as principal, market intelligence and strategy, global investor relations advisory. He has also led corporate access teams and issuer services for RBC Capital Markets, and Banc of America Securities. "He brings a deep understanding of investors, a significant track record in the capital markets, and is a highly respected connector within the investment community," said FNK IR partner Matt Chesler.

Firework, a livestreaming commerce and digital transformation platform, names **Meg Siegel** vice president of brand marketing. Siegel was previously head of brand strategy for TikTok's B2B marketing efforts in the U.S. Before that, she was global director of strategic marketing for Spotify and vice president of strategic marketing at Undertone. "Meg has already proven herself invaluable in defining and giving voice to the Firework brand," said Firework chief marketing officer Drew Cashmore.



Meg Siegel

Constant Contact, a digital marketing platform used by small businesses and nonprofits, hires **Mary Rusterholz** as chief people officer and **Stephanie Ting** as chief strategy officer. Rusterholz comes to the company from LightBox, a provider of due diligence, risk management, location intelligence and workflow solutions, where she was chief human resources officer. Before joining the team at Constant Contact, Ting ran the go-to-market strategy for Dolby Voice.

Power Digital hires **Stephanie Feldman** as its first CMO. Feldman comes to the agency from PwC, where she led marketing for the firm's digital services business. She previously oversaw the development of the first social media division at Digitaria (later becoming Mirum, and now Wunderman Thompson), a digital agency within WPP. At Power Digital, Feldman is charged with driving the strategic vision for the brand, highlighting its proprietary tech platform, SPRnova.

Aristocrat Gaming brings on **Oriana Branon** as VP of communications and corporate affairs. Branon comes to the company from Bill.com, where she was director of corporate communications. Before that, she was director of community and public relations in the San Francisco Bay Area for Alaska Airlines. In her new role, Branon will oversee all external and internal communications for the Gaming division.



Oriana Branon

Withings, which offers in-home devices that can monitor more than 20 health and wellness parameters, names **Elizabeth Coleon** chief marketing officer. Prior to joining Withings, Coleon served as marketing director and chief revenue officer at Qonto, a French online payment company for freelancers and SMEs. Before that, she was director of commercial growth at PayPal. Based in Paris, Coleon will leverage her previous expertise in selling high-value services to accelerate Withings' development worldwide.

U.S. TRUST IN NEWS LOWEST IN WORLD

The U.S. now exhibits the highest rate of media distrust of any country in the world, according to [a recent Reuters Institute survey](#).

Reuters' global report, which analyzed news consumption habits around the world as well as the public's sentiment toward media and the press, found that only 26 percent of U.S. residents said they trust the news most of the time, the lowest among the 46 countries analyzed in the Reuters report.

Americans' trust in the news has fallen three percentage points in the last year, according to the report. While the Reuters survey noted that trust in the news has fallen in about half the countries analyzed, the international average of people who say they trust most news most of the time is 42 percent.

Among U.S. respondents who identified as right-leaning, only 14 percent said they trust the news. By contrast, 39 percent of those claiming to be left-leaning trust most news most of the time.

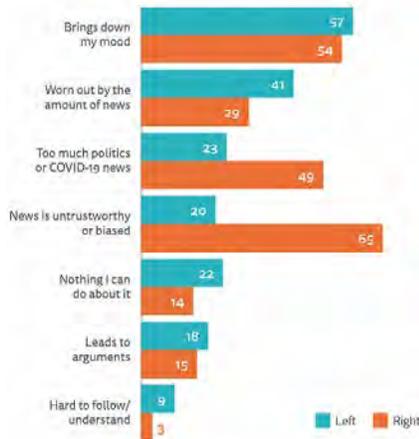
As a result, less than half of Americans (47 percent) today claim they're generally interested in consuming the news, compared to 67 percent in 2015. A similar number (42 percent) of U.S. respondents said they now avoid the news entirely, up from 41 percent in 2019 and 38 percent in 2017. The percentage of U.S. residents who said they consumed no news at all in the last week has skyrocketed this year, at 15 percent, compared to only 3 percent in 2013.

Americans' reasons for disconnecting from the news generally depend on their political leanings. Those who identify on the right are more likely to avoid the news because they think it's untrustworthy or biased (65 percent, compared to 20 percent of those on the left). Left-leaning Americans, on the other hand, are more likely to avoid the news because it brings down their mood (57 percent, compared to 54 percent of those on the right). An additional 49 percent of right-leaning respondents said they think the news is too heavy on COVID-19 and politics, compared to only 23 percent on the left.

Only 19 percent of U.S. residents said they currently pay for news content via online subscriptions. This is actually slightly higher than the international average, 17 percent.

Internationally, the Reuters report found that the number of news consumers who now claim they avoid the news has increased sharply. Brazil currently tops the list of countries for news avoidance, at 54 percent, followed by the UK (46 percent). By contrast, Finland boasts the highest level of trust in the news (69 percent).

Reuters Institute's "Digital News Report 2022," which was commissioned by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, was based on a YouGov survey of more than 93,000 online news consumers—including 2,036 U.S. residents—in 46 countries. Surveys were conducted in January and February.



Reasons why Americans avoid the news (right-leaning vs. left-leaning).

BRUNSWICK BOOSTS ABU DHABI CULTURE

Brunswick Group has signed a \$313K one-year pact to provide PR services to Abu Dhabi's Department of Culture and Tourism.

The work entails "horizon scanning" (e.g., monitoring relevant international and local news related to DCT), strategic planning, crisis and issues management and leadership positioning, according to the agreement.

Brunswick will conduct an ongoing review of the overarching integrated communications strategy for leadership including the corporate narrative, key messages, themes, content calendar and distribution channels based on business intelligence from DCT.

It will analyze up to six presentations prepared for DCT's chairman, undersecretary and strategic communications advisor and review a maximum of 24 press releases prepared by the Department.

Heather Salmond, who is head of Brunswick Abu Dhabi's office, leads the DCT effort.



GLASSMAN REPS UKRAINE'S SCM CONSULTING

Glassman Enterprises is providing media and public affairs support for SCM Consulting, Ukraine's largest financial and industrial group, under a five-month agreement worth \$200K.

Ukrainian oligarch Rinat Akhmetov founded System Capital Management and serves as its president.

James Glassman's firm represents SCM as a subcontractor to DCI Group, which is exposing the ongoing theft of Ukrainian steel, grain and minerals by Russia. Its \$40K monthly pact began June 28.

Glassman served as US propaganda chief during George W. Bush's administration. After serving as the State Dept.'s undersecretary for public diplomacy and chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, he became founding executive director of the George W. Bush Institute in 2009.



James Glassman

CONSELLO WORKS VOYAGER'S CHAPTER 11

Declan Kelly's Consello Group is serving as a financial advisor for Voyager Digital, which has filed for Chapter 11 as a casualty of the crash in cryptocurrency prices.

The Toronto-based cryptocurrency platform suffered losses of more than \$650M on a loan it made to Three Arrows Capital, a failed crypto investor. Its July 6 Chapter 11 filing is less than a week after it suspended trading and prevented customers from withdrawing funds.

Voyager CEO Stephen Ehrlich said the corporate restructuring "is the best way to protect assets on the platform and maximize value for all stakeholders, including customers."

The reorganization, once implemented, would allow customers to access their accounts.

Kelly launched Consello in February after resigning as CEO of Teneo in May 2021. He stepped down from Teneo, which he co-founded, after becoming inebriated at a Global Citizen event.

PR LEADERSHIP ON REBOUND

The quality of leadership at PR firms appears to be on the rebound, according to [The Plank Center's Report Card 2021](#).



The Report Card 2021 gave PR leaders an overall grade of B-, up a notch from the C+ they received in the 2019 and 2017 versions. Grades also ticked up slightly in four of the survey's five areas: job engagement (from B- to B), trust in organization, job satisfaction and organizational culture (all of which rose from C+ to B-).

The grades for the fifth category, leadership performance, reflect a marked difference between how top leaders see their own performance and how other employees rate them. Top leaders gave themselves an A- for leadership performance, but other employees only rated them as a C+. Those scores have held steady since the Report Card's first edition in 2015.

That disconnect is evident in other areas as well. While 72.8 percent of top leaders described themselves as "engaged" in their jobs, that number drops to 55.6 percent for those who are not in top leadership positions.

The divide between how male and female employees grade the PR industry persists in some areas and is narrowing in others. Female respondents give their organizations a lower trust score (4.96 out of a possible seven) than do male respondents (5.19). Women are also less willing to rely on their organizations to keep promises (4.95 vs. 5.20) and to trust them to take the opinions of employees like them into account when making decisions (4.77 vs. 5.12).

However, the gap between male and female employees when it comes to job engagement has shrunk. While the engagement rate for female employees plummeted from 61.3 percent in 2015 to 52.9 in 2017, the last two Report Cards have shown healthy jumps—to 57 percent in 2019 and 60.1 percent in 2021. Male respondents registered a 62.6 percent engagement rate in 2021, up from 62.3 in 2019.

The Plank Center Report Card was based on a 42-question survey that was distributed online and completed by 536 public relations leaders and professionals in the U.S.

ROCHESTER NEEDS PR TO REDUCE VIOLENCE

Rochester is looking for a partner to create a marketing communications campaign designed to reduce the amount of violence in that upstate New York City.



A study by Rochester Institute of Technology's Center for Public Safety Initiative found the city had the highest growth in per-capita homicides in the US during the past two years. There have been 31 homicides so far this year. Rochester registered a record 81 homicides in 2021.

Congressman Joe Morelle on June 17 called for federal intervention to curb gun violence in Rochester.

The objectives of the alternatives-to-violent-lifestyles marketing campaign are to "increase awareness of resources and encourage individuals and their loved ones to engage with these resources," according to the RFP.

"Success metrics" of the campaign include an increase in inquiries to Pathways to Peace, the Office of Neighborhood Safety, and members of the Rochester Peace Collective.

Proposals are due July 15.

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

MEDIA MANEUVERS

The Washington Post names David Shipley as editor of its editorial page. He will assume his new position after Labor Day. Shipley comes to the Post from Bloomberg, where he co-founded the opinion section and served as senior executive editor. He was previously deputy editorial page editor and op-ed editor at the *New York Times*, served as a speechwriter and special assistant to President Bill Clinton, and worked for Mike Bloomberg's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. "David has been very good at surfacing a range of views at the places he's worked, and that's what makes him so good for the *Washington Post*."



David Shipley

The Italian edition of Harper's Bazaar, which launched as a digital-only publication in the fall of 2020, is moving into print. The print edition will be led by Daria Veledееva, who was the editor-in-chief of Harper's Bazaar Russia for 13 years. Veledееva left her post at Harper's Bazaar Russia earlier this year after Hearst Magazines International terminated its deals with Russian publishing partners following the invasion of Ukraine.

The number of newspapers continues to shrink at the rate of about two per week, [according to a study](#) from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, Media and Integrated Marketing Communications. From late 2019 through the end of May 2022, the report says, more than 360 papers have shut down. Since 2005, it is estimated that the country has lost more than one-fourth of its newspapers. In addition, forty of the country's largest 100 papers now deliver a print edition six or fewer times a week—and 11 deliver just two times a week or less.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

TURNER signs on as agency of record for **Visit Indiana**. The agency will work with Visit Indiana's branding agency of record, WeCreate, to support the organization's new tourism campaign in all facets of public relations, both for consumer and for parts of economic development (specifically encouraging new graduates to consider moving or staying in Indiana post-graduation)..



Press Record Communications is selected to build the brand of **The City of Scranton, Pennsylvania** and help expand the city's reputation as a destination to visit, grow a business and raise a family. The agency will elevate Scranton's visibility through strategic earned media relations and social media tactics, while monitoring and providing counsel on engagement across the City's owned media channels.

Allen & Gerritsen is named agency of record by **The Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau**. A&G will lead an organizational rebrand and a comprehensive marketing campaign to transform and enhance global visitation to the region. The partnership will include brand and creative strategy, brand identity, design, creative concept development and production, data, analytics and more to be deployed across paid digital, social, TV, radio, print, out-of-home and trade show activations.

COMMENTARY



Boris Johnson

More than 50 ministers and officials in British prime minister Boris Johnson's administration quit their jobs because they finally became fed up with BoJo's antics, buffoonery and scandals.

"Them's the breaks," said the delusional Johnson, in announcing that he will step down once a successor is chosen, a process that could take months.

John Major, former PM and elder statesman of the Conservative Party, said BoJo should quit now for the good

of the country and the Tories.

The political upheaval in the UK sets the stage for Republicans in the US and offers a roadmap to redemption for those who served in the Trump administration.

After enabling Donald Trump's deceit, lies, disinformation, political attacks and treachery, they should have resigned.

They now have an opportunity to warn the nation of the dangers posed by a Trump II White House.

Your country needs you: Mike Pompeo (Trump's Secretary of State), Steve Mnuchin (Treasury), Wilbur Ross (Commerce), Alex Azar (Health & Human Services), Betsy DeVos (Education), Elaine Chao (Transportation) and Ben Carson (Housing & Urban Development).

Speak now or forever remain in shame. Time is running out.

Wake up, America. Republican Senator Mitt Romney wrote an eloquent essay for the July 4 *Atlantic* blog in which he criticized the nation for its blithe dismissal of "cataclysmic threats." He cited the prepared statement of renowned conservative judge Micheal Luttig who called the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol "a war for America's democracy, a war irresponsibly instigated and prosecuted by the former president, his political party allies, and his supporters."

Romney wrote that MAGA loyalists "snickered" that Luttig speaks slowly and celebrated the fact that most people didn't watch or read about his testimony.

The Utah Senator called president Biden "a genuinely good man" though unable "to break through our national malady of denial, deceit and distrust."

The return of Trump "would feed the sickness, probably rendering it incurable."

Romney prays for a leader to emerge with the stature of Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln or Volodymyr Zelensky "to rise above the din to unite us behind the truth."

There are plenty of Americans praying with Mitt.

One might as well use a dartboard or ouija board. Wall Street's economic forecasters are either bullish or bearish on the prospects of a recession.

Goldman Sachs says there is a 50 percent chance of a recession over the next year, which means there is a 50 chance that there won't be one.

Wells Fargo believes a recession in 2023 "seems more likely than not." Duh.

Citibank expects the economy to slow but not shrink, but it

sees recession probabilities "as appreciable and rising."

Morgan Stanley puts the odds of a recession happening over the next year at around 30 percent.

Deutsche Bank says head for the hills as a "somewhat more severe recession" is on the way sometime soon. Stay tuned.

These advisers get paid big bucks for their savvy.

Prop up propaganda. The Atlantic Council's Irina Plaks chides the US for neglecting its propaganda efforts, while Russia has built a formidable operation. She believes Team Biden needs a propaganda strategy focused on Russia's people, military and contested publics throughout the world.

The US needs outreach to expose Russians to the endemic corruption in their country, its cratering economy and the horrors in Ukraine.

US messaging should be aimed at Central Asian nations to warn them that they may be the next targets of Putin's aggressions, while those in Hungary or France who mouth Kremlin talking points must be called to task.

Plaks wrote that America's propaganda must advance democratic values and prioritize transparency and truth to ensure that the world understands what Putin is doing in Ukraine.

PR firms can play a leading role in that effort.

"Nyet" to Russia's propaganda. Canada on July 8, imposed sanctions against 45 Russian propaganda agents and disinformation outlets for enabling and supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The sanctioned media outlets include RT, TASS, Sputnik, Gazprom Media, All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Co., NTV Broadcasting and Rossiya-24 TV channel.

Melanie Joly, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, said Russia's propaganda machine must answer for its lies. "Canada is committed to fighting disinformation wherever and whenever it is found," said Joly. The sanctions "make it clear to those who peddle deception: you will be held accountable."

"Can American Democracy Survive the 2024 Elections" is a great question and the theme of a public symposium planned early next year by the Safeguarding Democracy Project, which was launched July 7 by UCLA's School of Law.

The Project's goal is to promote research, collaboration and advocacy aimed at ensuring continued free and fair elections in the US. UCLA professor Richard Hasen, a top election law scholar, heads the Project.

He said the Project will "use an all-hands-on-deck approach to address and challenge threats to our democracy, working to ensure that all eligible voters can freely cast their vote, that those votes will be fairly and accurately counted and that the election winners will undergo a peaceful transfer of power."

Among the Project's first events is a Sept. 20 discussion by Supreme Court journalist Adam Liptak (*New York Times*), Dahlia Lithwick (Slate) and Joan Biskupic (CNN) about the High Court's role in persevering America's democracy.

—Kevin McCauley