



Jack O'Dwyer,
Editor-in-Chief

O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750
www.odwyerpr.com; jobs.odwyerpr.com

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COHN & WOLFE DINES AT APPLEBEE'S

Applebee's has served global PR duties to Cohn & Wolfe, following a competitive pitch.

The fast casual chain, owned by DineEquity, is in the midst of a \$75M marketing overhaul, rebrand and menu and restaurant revamp in a bid to spur revenue. The includes introducing wood-fired grills and USDA Choice steaks.

C&W's Los Angeles and Austin offices will lead the account under the direction of US entertainment marketing chief and Austin managing director Callie Jernigan.



The work includes consumer, corporate and franchisee communications, as well as corporate communications support for DineEquity as it pertains to Applebee's. There was no incumbent since late 2014, when the company split with Crossroads.

DineEquity also owns the IHOP franchise. The company reported Applebee's sales fell 3.7% during the fiscal first quarter of 2016, while IHOP sales ticked up 1.5%. Total revenues topped \$163.5M for the period.

GYMR DISBANDS AFTER 18 YEARS

GYMR PR, the respected independent, Washington, D.C.-based PR firm focused on healthcare, has disbanded after an 18-year run.

Co-founder Patrick McCabe has set up McCabe Message Partners in DC with about 20 former staffers and a healthcare focus. Co-founder Sharon Reis is running The Reis Group out of DC with about a dozen staff members and clients in healthcare, science and social issues.

McCabe noted he signed on at GYMR at age 32 and said he wanted to "explore new adventures." McCabe, now 50, said he and Reis "realized the company we formed together 18 years ago looks very different from the actual teams each of us leads independently," adding they parted "as friends, wishing each other well and excited about what the future holds."

Reis said of her new venture: "We created a firm focused on delivering the highest-quality client services, while fostering creativity and balancing flexibility and growth for our team."

Reis' client roster includes Banner Alzheimer's Institute, the Leadership Program in Integrative Healthcare at Duke University, and The Vision Council, among others.

PADILLACRT PURCHASES FOODMINDS

PadillaCRT, one of the largest independent PR agencies in the Midwest, has acquired food and nutrition communications and consulting shop FoodMinds LLC. The merger effectively establishes Minneapolis-based PadillaCRT as one of the largest independent food and beverage agencies in the country.

Terms of the transaction were not publicly disclosed. FoodMinds in 2015 accounted for nearly \$8.3 million in food-related net fees, ranking as one of O'Dwyer's top-five firms for food and beverage PR.

Chicago-based FoodMinds was founded in 2006. The agency, which staffs 35, opened a Washington D.C. office in 2014 and a San Francisco outpost the following year. Clients include General Mills, Monsanto, Nestlé and Welch's, among others.

FoodMinds will now operate as a division of PadillaCRT and will collaborate on joint assignments with that agency's existing food and beverage practice, whose clients include U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, Prosciutto di Parma, the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers, Les Vins Georges Duboeuf and Wines from Rioja. Aside from the removal of the LLC designation, the FoodMinds name will remain the same, and agency staff and office locations will not be affected by the acquisition.

FoodMinds partners Laura Cubillos, Bill Layden and Sue Pitman now take the title of PadillaCRT executive vice presidents.

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FINSBURY TAPS SIPKINS FOR L.A. OUTPOST

Charles Sipkins, the former chief communications officer of Sony Pictures Entertainment, has joined Finsbury to open a Los Angeles office for the financial firm.

Sipkins was a top exec of Sard Verbinnen & Co. before joining Sony's movie division in 2013 as executive VP. He left just before the company plummeted into a massive crisis with the hacking of its internal email system amid the release of a satirical film about North Korea.

Finsbury CEO Michael Gross noted Sipkins' deep experience in high-stakes situation and said he will work with the new hire to expand Finsbury's business on the West Coast. Sipkins will work with Finsbury partner Jeff McAndrews in L.A.

He also held top posts at Abernathy MacGregor Group, FleishmanHillard and Hill+Knowlton Strategies.



Cubillos

CHICO'S FAS DONS JOELE FRANK

Fashion chain Chico's FAS has brought in Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher for PR support as it faces heat from activist investor Barington Capital.

New York-based Barington argues Chico's is underperforming peers and failing to create long-term value for shareholders. The firm is offering a slate of two board nominees, including Barington's CEO James Mitarotonda and former Macy's Merchandising CEO Janet Grove.



Chico's, which has been cutting costs and eyes more cuts up to \$85M, argues CEO Shelley Broder, who took the reins late last year, as well as CFO Todd Vogensen (July 2014) have the company on the right path. It is offering its own slate of independent director candidates.

Chico's, which has also engaged Innisfree M&A Inc. for the proxy showdown, has pushed its annual meeting from June 16 to July 21.

Joele Frank partner Barrett Golden leads the PR work for Chico's. Jennifer Powers is VP of IR for Chico's in-house.

Barington has engaged proxy solicitor and IR firm Okapi Partners.

In addition to the flagship Chico's, the company's brands include White House Black Market and Soma.

PENTAGON PAO IN LICENSE PLATE THEFT

Bryan Whitman, a career Pentagon public affairs official, has been charged with three counts of misdemeanor theft in an odd confrontation the *Washington Post* dubbed "the latest example of the District's perpetual parking wars."

The 58-year-old Whitman was picked up on a neighbor's security camera removing the license plates from a car belonging to the neighbor's nanny. That was after a note was left on the nanny's windshield, according to the Post, that warned "I know you are misusing this visitor pass to park here daily. If you do not stop I will report it."



Whitman

Whitman was named Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for PA in 2010 after working media operations at the Pentagon and serving as a senior spokesman. A former US Army officer, he was director of government affairs and PA for the USO in Washington prior to the Pentagon.

The Post reported Whitman agreed to a deal to pay \$1,000 restitution and perform 32 hours of community service in exchange for the charges being dropped in 10 months. He remains on the job.

JUSTICE'S PIERCE TO NEXT FIFTEEN'S VRGE

Emily Pierce, deputy director of public affairs at the US Department of Justice, has joined Washington-based policy communications firm Vrge Strategies as a senior

VP. Pierce focuses on legal, policy, anti-trust and homeland security issues for clients of the year-old firm that is part of Next Fifteen alongside PR firms like M Booth and Text 100. At the Justice Dept., she served as acting director of PA and handled issues like the recent iPhone encryption dust-up and the Obama administration's push for criminal justice reform under Attorneys General Loretta Lynch and Eric Holder.

She joined the administration from the No. 2 editor slot at *Roll Call*, where she earlier covered the Senate and White House.

She started her 17-year journalism career *Congressional Quarterly*.

BRODER ACCOUNTS FOR PA AT FAF

Matthew Broder, VP of corporate communications for Daymon Worldwide, has moved to the Financial Accounting Foundation as VP of public affairs.

The Norwalk, Conn.-based FAF oversees the Financial Accounting Standards Board and Government Accounting Standards Board, as well as their respective advisory councils. FASB governs generally accepted accounting principles and replaced the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' governing board in 1973.

Broder was previously VP of external communications for Pitney Bowes and handled communications for United Technologies.

His scope at the FAF includes FAF, FASB and GASB communications, external relations and government affairs.

PADILLACRT ACQUIRES FOODMINDS (Cont'd)

Cubillos, who co-founded the agency, told O'Dwyer's that FoodMinds is "thrilled to team up with an independent, well-established firm that shares our values and counsels its clients courageously."

"Joining an employee-owned agency allows our people more potential career growth and fuller development," Cubillos said. "It offers our clients expanded capabilities in digital, social and creative and enables us to take a leap forward in terms of intellectual property and the value we bring to our clients."

For the past four years, both agencies have worked in concert for a shared client, Hass Avocado Board. PadillaCRT CEO Lynn Casey told O'Dwyer's that FoodMinds' work on that account convinced the agency that FoodMinds made a formidable team with which it can pursue its clients' goals together.

"We are like-minded in our desire to further the kind of culture that enables our team members to thrive in every aspect of their lives — at work and beyond," Casey said.

PadillaCRT, which maintains additional offices in New York, Los Angeles and Alexandria and Richmond, VA, was founded in 1961. Formerly known as Padilla Speer Beardsley, the Minneapolis-based agency in 2013 acquired Richmond, VA-based shop CRT/tanaka, a merger that birthed the Padilla CRT name. The agency in 2015 accounted for nearly \$35 million in net fees, according to O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms.

VILLAGE VOICE NAMES ROBBINS CITY EDITOR

New York City weekly publication *The Village Voice* has appointed Gothamist features editor Christopher Robbins to the role of city editor.

He begins the job in mid-June.

Robbins has been with New York-based news and culture website Gothamist since early 2011, where he started as an intern. He's since written more than 4,000 articles for the site and was instrumental to Gothamist's forays into breaking news coverage. Prior to joining Gothamist, he was previously a contributing editor to Brooklyn-based music publication *Impose Magazine*.



Robbins

Robbins will now be responsible for day-to-day oversight of content on *villagevoice.com*, will expand the site's contributor base and strengthen its coverage of city politics. He will also contribute to the weekly paper.

The *Village Voice*, the famed New York newspaper that birthed the alternative weekly media category, in October was acquired by Reading, PA-based publisher Peter Barbey, owner of daily newspaper *Reading Eagle*.

FACEBOOK BECOMES TOP B2B SOURCE

Facebook is quickly becoming the go-to social channel for B2B marketers when it comes to finding information about vendors.

The insight comes from a new report conducted by New York-based communications agency Hotwire PR and technology market research provider Vanson Bourne, which gauged the habits, preferred channels and ways in which marketing decision-makers are now consulting varying forms of media when making a purchasing decision.

While it may be widely assumed that LinkedIn is the preferred source for B2B marketers when seeking vendor information, the "Changing Face of Influence" report found that one in four (24 percent) of respondents now say Facebook is their top destination when it comes to researching information on a purchasing decision, beating LinkedIn (17 percent) and Twitter (6 percent). On average, marketing decision-makers said they now use Facebook 18 days a month for this purpose, compared to 13 days for LinkedIn.

However, LinkedIn and Twitter remain the top channels for actual digital B2B marketing, revealing a divide that appears to exist between how Facebook is used by marketers themselves and how they envision its use by others. While it's clear that more in the B2B marketing community are embracing Facebook for finding information about vendors and will continue to do so in the future, nearly a third — 30 percent — of respondents said they don't plan to use Facebook in their own B2B marketing.

The report also found that despite declarations to the contrary, traditional media appears to be going strong in the B2B marketing realm. An overwhelming majority — 87 percent — said traditional media and social media remain equally important as reference points and sources of information in the purchasing process. The report

found, however, that respondents were more likely to engage with newer outlets that have a digital-only presence, with Business Insider and the Huffington Post being the two most widely-read publications among marketers, and the former being the most consulted publication throughout the buying process.

While 89 percent admitted it's now easier than ever to find relevant information when they're researching a potential purchase, many said they still lack information when it comes to making a purchasing decision. Nearly half of respondents said they now proactively seek out case studies when researching vendors, but more than a third — 37 percent — said they find it difficult to find relevant information when they're at the final stage of the buying process, and 50 percent said they'd like to see more impartial and independent commentary issued by vendors to assist them with the purchasing process.

The "Changing Face of Influence" report surveyed 1,000 marketing and IT decision-making pros between March and April who reside in the US, UK, Germany, Spain, France, Australia and New Zealand.

NYWICI NAMES KELLEY PRESIDENT

Jacki Kelley, the former North American CEO of Interpublic Mediabrands who now serves as Bloomberg Media chief operating officer, has been named president of New York Women in Communications.

The news was announced on May 26 as NYWICI unveiled its board of directors for the 2016-2017 year. NYWICI, the non-profit association for women in marketing and advertising, was founded in 1929 and has hosted its annual Matrix Awards since 1970.

Kelley, who has held the Bloomberg COO slot since September 2014, succeeds Kimberly Kelleher, chief revenue officer and publisher of *Wired*.

"I'm so honored to be a part of an organization of women who are constantly inspiring one another to achieve and share their successes," Kelley said in a statement. "I'm looking forward not only to working with some of the most influential women in the communications industry, but to having the opportunity to nurture the industry's future female leaders and leading NYWICI in a time of rapid industry change." Other NYWICI 2016-2017 board of director appointments are as follows:

President-Elect: Stacy Martinet, Chief Marketing Officer, Mashable

Vice President, Strategic Planning: Susan Schulz, Content Creator, Editor & Strategist

Vice President, Strategic Planning: Lynn Lewis, Global Chief Marketing Officer, UM Worldwide
Treasurer: Denise Gillen

Assistant Treasurer: Audrey Pass, Chief Marketing Officer, Empire State Realty Trust, Inc.

Chief Communications Officer: Jessica Kleiman, Consumer Communications Director, Instagram

Vice President, Communications: Rachel Bowie, Editor, PureWow



Kelley

THE AGE OF TRUMP AND THE DEATH OF PR

By Fraser P. Seitel

A few years ago, the hottest book about public relations was called, *The Death of Advertising and the Rise of PR*, which predicted that paid media was no match for earned media in the age of social media.

As it happened, while earned media through the third party endorsement of others is, indeed, more valuable these days, advertising is by no means dead. In fact, it's thriving through all sorts of new channels.

But if a certain presidential candidate continues to shine, PR as we have come to know it may be headed for the scrap heap, particularly the traditional media relations counsel for which public relations professionals are known.

Just consider the way candidate Trump handled the media at his last press conference regarding contributing to veterans' groups and how his answers differed from the way he would have been counseled by folks like us.

Q: "How personally involved were you in deciding which military organizations were to be recipients of your gifts?"

PR Advice: Indicate that you were intimately involved with the decisions, because all of us have so much to be thankful for regarding our fighting men and women; most of us pale in comparison to these selfless heroes.

Trump: "I wasn't too involved in picking the organizations other than I gave a million dollars to the marine law enforcement; marines, they are fabulous people. They honored me last year."

Q: "But you waited so long to follow through on your contribution promise. Don't you believe you should be accountable to the people?"

PR Advice: Suggest that, of course you're "accountable" for your words and explain, without rancor toward the media, that these donations took some time to raise, but that's what now has been done, which is most important.

Trump: "I'm totally accountable, but I didn't want to have credit for it. We have given to groups that are unbelievable groups, and honestly, I wish you could hear the phone calls and see the letters, they are so happy. And I'm happy to do it. I didn't want the credit for it, but it was very unfair that the press treated us so badly."

Q: "But shouldn't a Presidential candidate expect scrutiny from the press?"

PR Advice: Agree with the premise and point out how available you've been. But reiterate that all you are asking for is "fairness" in coverage. Be magnanimous, understanding the media have a job to do. Be careful not to antagonize them.

Trump: "I don't mind scrutiny. What I don't like is lies. You can scrutinize me all day long but you set up false premises. You state things about me that are not true. Then you run stories on that. That's why I'm out here trying to correct the record."

Q: "Do you have examples of what you call 'unfairness?'"

PR Advice: Careful. Don't get sucked into a name-calling spat with the press. Keep your examples generic

as to their benign treatment of Hillary versus the way you're always challenged. Just keep it general.

Trump: "I'm not looking for credit. But what I don't want is when I raise millions of dollars, to have people say — like this sleazy guy right over here from ABC. He's a sleaze in my book."

Q: "So you think the press is out to get you?"

PR Advice: No. No. No. No. No. You can't win this one. Again, acknowledge they're doing their job and appeal for fair treatment. Then drop it. Move on. And for God's sake, don't point fingers at anybody else. It's a lose/lose.

Trump: "Excuse me. I've watched you on television. You're a real beauty. When I raise money for the veterans, and it's a massive amount of money, find out how much Hillary Clinton's given to the veterans."

Q: "Are you even going to be critical about Republicans if they don't support you?"

PR Advice: They'll come around. Don't take the bait. Express optimism about the "big tent." At least, this will move away from the subject of you and the press.

Trump: "If they attack me, yes. Somebody comes after me, maybe not as much if they're Republican, but I'm still gonna go after 'em, of course I am. But the media, the media totally wants Hillary Clinton to win, but they're so conflicted."

Q: "What purpose does it serve to call Republicans and conservatives 'losers?'"

PR Advice: None. So tell them that's why you're going to start to build up the party as it unifies behind you — one big happy family united against Hillary. And please, for the love of God, no more names!

Trump: "No, I didn't say that. I said Bill Kristol is a loser. And I'll tell you why. He has called every single move — take a look, on me. 'He's going to lose this state.' I win in a landslide. I didn't say everybody. Many, but I didn't say everybody."

Q: "If you're President, will we be having this kind of confrontation in the pressroom at the White House?"

PR Advice: No, please, no. Just repeat that as long as they treat you fairly, you will be square with them. Reiterate that you understand the role of the press in our democracy and that you wholeheartedly believe that most working reporters just want to get it right.

Trump: "Yeah, it is gonna be like this. If the press writes false stories, like they did with this, because, you know, half of you are amazed that I raised all of this money. If the press writes false stories like they did, then we have to read probably libelous stories, or certainly close, in the newspapers, and the people know the stories are false, I'm gonna continue to attack the press. Look, I find the press to be extremely dishonest. I find the political press to be unbelievably dishonest. I will say that.

And that, in bone-chilling, verbatim detail is why if candidate Trump becomes President Trump, the days of the trusted, public relations advisor may be numbered.

Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 40 years.



NEWS OF PR FIRMS

JONES-MITCHELL NOW PRES. OF BRANDWARE

Jennifer Jones-Mitchell, executive VP and managing director for Hope-Beckham, has moved to Brandware PR in Atlanta as president of the firm.

She reports to CEO Elke Martin, who praised Jones-Mitchell as a "proven leader with a sharp vision" for creating strategies and programs. She will oversee teams in Atlanta and Los Angeles for the firm.

Jones-Mitchell was senior VP of consumer strategy at Publicis and a senior VP for global digital and social media at Porter Novelli. She also did VP stints at Fletcher Martin and Macquarium, and was a senior strategist for Alexander Ogilvy.



Jones-Mitchell

DEVRIES UPS SANZ OSSO TO COO

DeVries Global has promoted Ivette Sanz Osso to chief operating officer of the Interpublic-owned firm.

Sanz Osso, recently EVP of global practices, is a ten-year veteran of DeVries and played a key role in its overseas expansion over the past six years.

As COO, she reports to CEO Heidi Hovland with responsibility for all operational functions including finance, talent/HR and the integration of the firm's creative intelligence and business intelligence global resources.

Devries' global client leads also report directly to Sanz Osso.

Hovland called it a key time for the firm and noted Sanz Osso will "lead the charge to fuel incremental business growth in key regions."

KETCHUM TAPS NEW PARTNERS

Ketchum has elected 13 new partners of the Omnicom-owned firm.

Rob Flaherty, senior partner, CEO and president of the firm, said members of the group were chosen "for being the kind of leader others want to work with, for starting and finishing with what is best for our clients, for being known and respected inside and outside of the agency, for being generous with what and who they know, and for making heroes of others."

The partners include John Bailey, managing director, Ketchum Singapore; Valeria Perito, CEO of Ketchum Brazil, based in São Paulo; Vicky Wagner, CEO of Brandzeichen, based in Düsseldorf; Yonnie Woo, managing director of Ketchum Korea, based in Seoul; Joe Becker, associate director of Ketchum Digital, New York; Alison Doughty, managing director of Inspired Science, London; Corinne Gudovic, director of the Midwest brand marketing practice, Chicago; Chris Handler, director, social marketing practice, D.C.; Kevin Oates, director of the Los Angeles corporate & PA practice; Paul Wood, director of the New York corporate & PA unit; Steve Navarra, director of finance and operations for Ketchum South, Ketchum Digital and Ketchum Canada, Atlanta; Dave Scott, director of European finance, London, and Katherine Yustak, director of North America HR, New York.

NEW ACCOUNTS

New York Area

Feintuch Communications, New York/BlueHornet, email marketing services provider, as AOR, including an integrated PR program for BlueHornet. The account will be led by agency President Henry Feintuch, senior account director Doug Wright and account director Bennie Sham.

Indra PR, New York/Philippe Restaurant and its new brand, CHOW by Philippe, as AOR.

Finn Partners, New York/mHealth Israel, Israel's largest digital and tech health community, as communications AOR, including public communications, media relations, creative, social media and reputation positioning. FP's Jerusalem office heads the work. MI claims 2,500 members and facilitates global meetups, roadshows, and databases, among other efforts, in addition to its annual mHealth Israel Conference, a global gathering of health/tech investors.



Bullfrog + Baum, New York/Katz's Delicatessen, iconic New York Jewish deli, and Tilit, chef and streetwear apparel, as AOR for PR. For Katz, the firm will work to preserve and build brand strength as it scales and realizes its upcoming projects including the opening of its second location as the anchoring culinary vendor in Brooklyn's Dekalb



Market. Foro Tilit, the firm will help the company expand beyond its chef-wear category.

MoJJo Collaborative, New York/JASA, not-for-profit that helps seniors stay in their homes, as AOR.

East

Chedwick Marketing Group, Wilmington, Del./Enterprise Energy, oil and gas company, for investor relations counsel.

Southeast

The Buzz Agency, Delray Beach, Fla./B&B Franchise Group, franchisor of Burger & Beer Joint "gourmet burger sports restaurant," as AOR for PR. Woo Creative picked up creative duties.

Southwest

The Richards Group, Dallas/Pie Five Pizza Co., for brand strategy and creative, digital and social strategy, and media buying and planning, following a review.

The James Agency, Scottsdale, Ariz./Mountain Shadows, luxury resort slated to open in early 2017 in Paradise Valley. The firm also picked up two new Marriott properties, Moxy Temple and AC Hotel Phoenix Tempe/Downtown.

West

Outside PR, Sausalito, Calif./Beachbody, for publicity and event marketing support of its line of nutrition drink mixes, Beachbody Performance.

NEWS OF SERVICES**ZAPWATER BEST IN SHOW AT TRUMPETS**

Zapwater Communications took home Best in Show honors at the Publicity Club of Chicago's annual Golden Trumpet Awards June 2.

The firm won the group's Platinum Award for the opening of Virgin Hotels Chicago, the Virgin company's first hotel property.

The four-month campaign garnered more than 440M media impressions and an estimated \$39M in publicity value.

Zapwater also won five Gold Trumpets in the competition.

Johnson Publishing CEO Desiree Rogers headlined the event, while emcee was meteorologist Mike Caplan of FOX 32.

Bridget Coffing, who recently retired as McDonald's chief communications officer, was honored with the group's lifetime achievement award.

PCC president Tim Frisbie called the competition the Midwest's premier awards for communications professionals.

The group is marking its 75th year in 2016.

Full list of winners will be posted at publicity.org.

NEW NYWICI BOARD (Continued from page 3)

Chief Membership Officer: Gail Griffin, General Manager & VP, Digital, Barron's, Dow Jones

Vice President, Membership: Sandra Thomas, VP of Community Affairs, WABC-TV

Vice President, Corporate Membership: Elizabeth Kressel, Managing Director, Lizard Media

Vice President, Corporate Membership: Ashley Chauvin, Global Insights, Citi

Vice President, Professional Programming: Georgia Galanoudis, Managing Director, Imprint

Vice President, Professional Programming: Jennifer Owens, Editorial director, *Working Mother* magazine & Founding Director, Working Mother Research Institute (WMRI)

Vice President, Young Professional Programming: Megan Hess, Mobile and Emerging Platforms Editor, Bloomberg

Vice President, Student Programming: Lori Greene, Advisory Council Chair, Fox School of Business at Temple University

Vice President, Student Programming: Danielle Dardashti, Branded Content Innovator

Vice President, High School Programming: Stephanie M. Guzmán, Assistant Account Executive, Ketchum

Vice President, High School Programming: Taylor Trudon, Life Lead, MTV

Vice President, Scholarships and Grants: Judith Harrison, Senior Vice President, Staffing and Diversity & Inclusion, Weber Shandwick

Vice President, Scholarships and Grants: Janet Warren Dugo, President, Warren Dugo Media Inc.

Vice President, Sponsorship: Laura Sequenzia, VP, Network Sales & Partnerships, Condé Nast

Vice President, Sponsorship: Piper Goodspeed, Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships, WIRED Media

PEOPLE**Joined**

Tanvir Hannan, senior vice president and director of strategic research and analytics at Publicis Worldwide, to Horizon Media, New York, as head of conversations, a new position at the media buying and services agency. He first joined Publicis in 2007 and prior to that was a senior account manager at market research company Ipsos-ASI and a senior account executive at brand and communications research agency Hall and Partners. He leads Horizon's consumer-based research in the agency's research unit, Why Group.

**Hannan**

Angie Mathews, copywriter and web content specialist for California State University's Long Beach branch, to CGPR, a Marblehead, MA-based lifestyle PR agency as an A/E in the firm's West Coast outpost in Costa Mesa, Calif. Earlier, she was marketing manager and A/D at Costa Mesa-based agency Shout PR worked in fashion PR in New York.

Mary Hagan, managing director of agriculture-focused agency Osborn Barr, to the National Corn Growers Association as VP of communications. The association, based in Chesterfield, Mo., and with a Washington, D.C., outpost, said the appointment is part of an "elevated focus" on telling its story. NCGA president Chip Bowling said the trade group's new strategic plan includes a focus on improving consumer trust. "Mary's work helping counter negative perceptions and uniting diverse groups is exactly the type of experience and leadership we need to help us strengthen our relationship with customers and consumers," he said. Corn has been a particularly hot topic in several sectors of late including food (corn syrup), economics (commodity prices) and politics (ethanol). Hagan was a senior VP for Leo Burnett in Chicago and directed the McDonald's Europe account at Creaa Promotion in the UK. She is also a former manager for Arthur Andersen & Co.

**Hagan**

John Hall, a managing director and senior analyst at Wells Fargo, joins MetLife today as senior VP and head of IR for the insurer. Bloomberg reported that MetLife CEO Steve Kandarian is working to bolster shareholder support for his plan to boost cash flow amid stock declines. Hall will "manage and coordinate the company's financial results and business strategies to the analyst and investor community," the company said. Previously he was an equity analyst at Alex. Brown & Sons and Prudential Securities.

Promoted

Maya Shackley to chief financial officer, Dezenhall Resources, Washington, D.C. Also, **Steven Schlein** was upped to executive VP, **Anne Marie Malecha** to senior VP, and **Sam Jefferies** to VP. **Morgan Said**, a Capitol Hill aide, has joined as an associate. **Jason Milch** to partner, Baretz+Brunelle, Chicago. He helped launched the firm in February.

KEKST, ABMAC IN OMEGA PROXY SHOWDOWN

Abernathy MacGregor and Kekst are engaged in a proxy showdown over publicly traded nutritional supplement company Omega Protein Corp.

Houston-based Omega is facing a proxy contest from hedge fund Wynnefield Capital, which is offering two candidates for Omega's board. Wynnefield says it wants to "reverse the company's trajectory of capital loss."

The proxy contest turned particularly sour late last week when Wynnefield sued Omega in Nevada state court to obtain shareholder information, a move dubbed a "blatant public relations effort to distract stockholders" by Omega.

Omega is working with Abernathy MacGregor, where executive VP Syndey Isaacs is advising Omega out of Houston. The company has also engaged D.F. King & Co. for proxy solicitation.

On the flip side, Wynnefield Capital is working with Kekst on the PR front. Kekst managing directors Mark Semer and Danniell Yunger are on the Wynnefield team.

Omega's annual meeting is set for June 28. First quarter revenues were up 18% to \$84.8M with net income of \$8.4M.

KINCH TAKES KETCHUM WEST REINS

Melissa Kinch, a partner and 19-year Ketchum vet, is being elevated to lead Ketchum's West Coast operations.

Kinch, a former associate director of the firm's North American corporate and public affairs practice, takes the director role responsible for San Francisco and Los Angeles previously held by Dave Chapman, who is moving to a new role focused on environmental reputation.



Kinch

The changes take effect July 1.

Ketchum senior partner and CEO Barri Rafferty called Kinch "a real star in our business" and a "well-rounded leader." She noted that Chapman will play a key role in an environmental field the firm sees as a significant growth area.

EVINS SELECTS SCHALTENBRAND AS SVP

New York-based marketing communications and PR firm Evins Communications has appointed Robert Schaltenbrand a member of the agency's leadership team, where he will fill the position of senior vice president.

Schaltenbrand joins Evins from hospitality company CORE: club, where he served as marketing and development director.

Prior to that, he was with technology giant Microsoft, which he joined in 2007 as brand manager of the company's entertainment and devices division before eventually becoming that division's group marketing manager.



Schaltenbrand

He also served as a marketing manager for iconic shoe company Converse and was an account director at New York based marketing and advertising company Kir-

shenbaum Bond Senecal + Partners.

At Evins, Schaltenbrand will now provide counsel to the agency's clients as well as oversee Evins' lifestyle group.

Evins Chairman Mathew L. Evins said he has "no doubt that Rob's dynamic and exceptional skill set will be invaluable and instrumental, not only to the clients in our Lifestyle Group but to all of the Agency's clients as well as to our commitment to innovative content, programming and strategies."

RNC ADDS HISPANIC COMMS DIRECTOR

The Republican National Committee, looking to woo a key Hispanic demographic of voters with Latino critic Donald Trump at the top of the party's presidential ticket, has brought in politico Helen Aguirre Ferre as director of Hispanic communications.

The RNC's previous director stepped down this week for a post with the conservative American Action Network.

Ferre, a frequent GOP-aligned pundit, handled Hispanic outreach for Jeb Bush's short-lived presidential campaign last year.

She hosted Univision America Radio's "Zona Politica con Helen Aguirre" for four years and penned a column for the *Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald*.

RNC chair Reince Priebus said she will be "an integral part of our party's ongoing commitment to build relationships and communicate our message directly with Hispanic voters."

He added she will be a "tremendous asset to the RNC as we seek to stop Hillary Clinton and elect a Republican president."

Ferre said: "I am proud to be joining the RNC at such a critical time. This is one of the most important elections of our lifetime, and I'm eager to make the case to the Hispanic community why Republican ideas and values are the way forward for our country after eight years of an Obama agenda which has failed all Americans."



Ferre

RUBIO PR STAFFER TO CBS NEWS IN DC

Caitlin Conant, a communications director for Marco Rubio's presidential campaign, has landed at CBS News in Washington, D.C., as communications director for the D.C. bureau and "Face the Nation."

Conant spent three months with the Rubio campaign and was drafted from the office of Rep. Rob Portman, where she was press secretary and later communications director.

Her husband, Alex Conant, was press secretary to Rubio in the Senate and communications director for Rubio's campaign.

Caitlin Conant was press secretary to Sen. Richard Burr and a press aide for former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty's 2011 presidential bid.



Conant

Hamptons media, caving to political pressure, are short-changing the public on facts needed so democracy can function. Awareness and discussion of two current issues suffer from an info deficit—the proposed eruv and Wi-Fi radiation in the local library and schools.

The *Southampton Press*/27east.com bowed to political and religious powers June 3 by skipping mention of the major news of the June 2 Westhampton Beach board of trustees meeting—the adoption of an agreement with the East End Eruv Assn. allowing permanent affixing of Jewish religious symbols to 46 utility poles.

Also newsy was the fact that Mayor Maria Moore and the four other trustees refused to divulge the wording of the deal, saying they won't until it is signed.

This brought a demand by this reporter, a homeowner and registered voter in WHB, that no deal be signed until the public has had the chance not only to see the agreement but to have a “town hall” on it. Nothing should be done until the full summer population is restored and until the election June 17 which could depose Moore and the other trustees.

This issue is of national importance since blocking an eruv in WHB would jeopardize eruvim throughout the nation, as resident Arnold Sheiffer has said. He is chair of Jewish People for the Betterment of WHB, which has 400+ members.

The local ultra-Orthodox community and the national Orthodox community are no doubt putting immense pressure on the local government and local media.

Not present at the meeting was *New York Times* reporter Matt Chaban who authored a third of a page article on the WHB eruv May 30. The article, by showing in color the WHB eruv on the Westhampton Synagogue website, demolishes court arguments that eruvim are “invisible” or “nearly invisible.”

NYT has nearly one million circulation throughout the U.S. and its stories are permanently archived on its web.

Police Chief Gets Big Play

SHPress/27east 's Erin McKinley only reported the appointment of Trevor Gonce as police chief. A 20-year veteran of the force, he already was provisional police chief. He flunked the civil service test last year but passed it in March with a grade of 79.

Gonce succeeded Police Chief Ray Dean who retired in 2014 with a package that included \$403K for 15 years of unused sick, vacation and personal days and a pension estimated at \$142K yearly. The *New York Post* called it a “criminal payout.”

We took the podium at the end of the meeting along with other residents and put our remarks on the public record since the meeting is videotaped gavel-to-gavel for showing on Channel 22 in about a week.

The remarks we had time to make in five minutes and before being ordered to leave the podium included reference to the 2005 Supreme Court decision of *McCree County vs. ACLU of Kentucky* that barred permanent religious symbols on public property. Temporary

symbols were allowed.

Text of Agreement Has False Statement

After withholding all details of the EEEA agreement on “agendas” that were published up until June 2 on the WHB website, the trustees then provided nine paragraphs relating to the deal in a handout to the 60 people at the meeting.

The text had a false statement. It said that the settlement “does not create or recognize a religious boundary” when that is exactly what it does.

If the WHB agreement is like the one adopted by Southampton Aug. 25, 2015, it will also say that “the erection of the eruv is not an unconstitutional establishment of religion under the First Amendment” when that is exactly what it would do. The statement on Constitutionality is on page one of the SH agreement.

Flaws in the agreement with the EEEA including mis-statements about the nature of an eruv and its Constitutionality could invalidate the agreement, lawyers tell us.

Unethical and undemocratic, in our view, is voting on the agreement with no public discussion allowed when the meeting began with a “public hearing” on an application by Elyse Richman, owner of Shock for Kids in WHB, for placement of three child size mannequins outside her store.

There was a public hearing for Richman but not for citizens who might have wanted to discuss the deal with the EEEA during the official portion of the meeting.

Also, ramming through approval of the agreement with EEEA on June 2 prevents many citizens from monitoring this since they don't return in large numbers until late June or even July.

Mayor Moore and the trustees face an election June 17 and now that they have shown their hand about the eruv/EEEA deal, while concealing up until now, they could all be replaced at the election by write-in candidates.

Keeping citizens in the dark and trying to squeeze in a controversial agreement before an election and before many citizens have returned are ethical violations of democratic principles.

The SHPress/271east.com should be editorializing in favor of full disclosure of the EEEA deal instead of skipping the story.

We squeezed in at the end of our five minutes the fact that we have found high levels of pulsed, microwave radiation in the library.

We aimed our remarks at Tom Moore, president of the Westhampton Free Library board, who is the husband of Mayor Maria Moore.

Mayor Moore should speak to her husband about the dangerous conditions in the library for all patrons and especially the staff who get radiated all day long.

Using an Acoustimeter, we found high levels in the children's area and peak levels of six volts per meter and 2,500 micro-watts per square meter in the room used by the library board and a bridge group that meets Tuesdays.

– Jack O'Dwyer