



**Kevin McCauley**  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter



**The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications**

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May 14, 2018 Vol. 51 No. 20

## **IBM PICKS WEBER SHANDWICK**

IBM has picked Weber Shandwick as global lead agency for the estimated \$15M account following a competitive pitch that kicked off earlier this year with the arrival of chief communications officer Ray Day from Ford Motor.



**Ray Day**

Ketchum and Text100 had the IBM business since 2001 following a review of 50 firms. Text100 opted to bow out of Day's review, while Ketchum participated.

Weber Shandwick will lead a "blended team" of agency talent and IBM staffers overseeing the newsroom, content, events, analytics and stakeholder relations.

Three shops will support the Interpublic Group unit. SKDKnickerbocker will work on US strategy and narrative; Spectrum Science will focus on Watson Health and thought leadership, and Ryan Seacrest's Civic Entertainment Group will deal with influencer and citizen initiatives.

## **AT&T BOSS SAYS HIRING COHEN WAS MISTAKE**

AT&T chief Randall Stephenson told staffers via a memo that hiring President Trump's personal lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen was a "big mistake."

Ma Bell shelled out \$600K to Essential Consultants, Cohen's shell company, for advice on its \$85B acquisition of Time Warner, a deal opposed by Trump. A federal judge will rule June 12 on the future of the ATT/Time Warner merger.

Stephenson said the payment was legal and "extremely legitimate" though a "serious misjudgment."

Cohen formed Essential Consultants to pay \$130K to porn star Stormy Davis, who allegedly had sex with Trump.



**Michael Cohen**

## **WSJ ALUM SOLOMON MOVES TO APCO**

Jay Solomon, a former chief foreign correspondent at the *Wall Street Journal*, has joined APCO as a director in its global solutions practice.

Since joining the WSJ in 1998, he's reported from Jakarta, New Delhi, South Korea and DC on national security and US foreign policy issues.

Most recently, he was a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Solomon will counsel APCO clients on foreign policy, national security, cybersecurity, media engagement and brand positioning.

## **WPP GETS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FROM BP**

BP is sticking with WPP in the aftermath of the "extraction" of CEO/founder Martin Sorrell from the helm of the ad/PR combine.

The British energy giant launched a high-profile competitive review mid-2017 and has chosen WPP as the preferred partner for its corporate, fuels and Castrol oil business globally.



**Martin Sorrell**

WPP's Team Energy includes advertising, PR, marketing communications, research and branding talent from Ogilvy, Grey, Mindshare, Essence, VML, SocialLabs and Landor.

Geoff Morrell, BP's group head of communications & external affairs, noted that the energy giant has enjoyed a highly successful and exceptional partnership with WPP.

WPP COO Andrew Scott said his firm is delighted to begin a new chapter in its relationship with BP.

### **Sorrell Slates Comeback**

Martin Sorrell says he will return to the ad/PR business following last month's exit from WPP in the aftermath of an internal probe into his personal conduct.

At the Techonomy conference in New York, Sorrell said leaving WPP provided him with a better perspective of the challenges faced by legacy agencies.

He does not have a "no-compete" arrangement with WPP, which he founded 33 years ago.

## **MDC'S Q1 LOSS WIDENS**

MDC Partners' chief Scott Kauffman reported a \$31.4M first-quarter loss, up from \$11.1M a year ago.

Revenues dipped five percent to \$327M, due partly to adoption of an accounting rule that shaved revenues by \$21.3M.

Kauffman, who had been bullish on 2018 coming into the year, said the mini-ad/PR conglomerate's performance in March and April was "disappointing."

Client spending cutbacks and "a slower conversion of our new business pipeline" caused Kauffman to update MDC's targets for the year.

MDC now expects organic growth from one to three percent compared to the original four percent target. Organic growth during the first-quarter was one percent.

MDC's PR firms include Hunter PR, Kwittken, Sloane & Co and Allison+Partners.



**Scott Kauffman**

## **CAPOZZI PUSHES PR TO REACH OUT**

In accepting the PRSA Foundation's 2018 Paladin Award on May 10, former MSL Group chairman Lou Capozzi challenged the audience to "touch one more life, mentor one more kid."

The long-time champion of diversity spoke of the positive impact that the 200 people attending the event could make if they just reached out to help just one young person further his or her career.



**Lou Capozzi**

Capozzi has been taken aback by the "resurgence of racism" in the US, which he blamed in part on the "toxic rhetoric of the president." He faulted the president for lacking the "moral authority" to lead the US.

He noted that America is a country of immigrants, who trace their roots to places that were once impoverished and looked down upon. His family came from Naples and Sicily.

He made an exception for African-Americans, whose ancestors were "torn from their civilizations and sold into slavery."

Calling PR the "voice of the people," Capozzi said PRSA Foundation's mission to foster diversity and inclusion is as vital as ever.

Judith Harrison, PRSA Foundation president and Weber Shandwick's senior VP for diversity and inclusion, introduced Capozzi as a friend and mentor.

She rallied the audience, saying, time's up for words about diversity, it's time for action.

Weber Shandwick, McCann WorldGroup, Zeno, Kekst, MSL, Edelman, Prudential, Best Buy, Axis, Bayer and the Neptune Family Foundation were among sponsors of the event.

## **DIVERSITY UP FOR MARKETERS**

Gender and ethnic diversity may be lacking at the top levels of the marketing business, but it is a far greater presence at the rank-and-file level of the industry, according to a survey conducted by the Association of National Advertisers.

The survey asked 23,000 people in the rank-and-file marketing workforce to anonymously answer questions related to four characteristics: gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. It follows a survey done earlier this year, in which CMOs answered similar questions.

At the rank-and-file level, women constitute a sizeable majority (67 percent) of marketers—a bump up from the 45 percent number recorded for CMOs in the earlier survey. While the new survey showed that 74 percent of rank-and-file marketers are white, that shows a level of diversity greater than the 87 percent of CMOs that listed themselves as white in the earlier study. Asians accounted for 10 percent of the rank-and-file marketing workforce, with Hispanics coming in at eight percent and African-Americans at six percent. Those numbers are considerably higher than those recorded for CMOs.



## **PEOPLE ON THE MOVE**

**Abernathy MacGregor** has appointed **Carina Davidson** president. Davidson has been with the firm for more than 20 years, most recently as managing director and chief operating officer. Prior to joining Abernathy MacGregor, she specialized in issues management and public affairs at Edelman. Davidson succeeds Chuck Burgess, who after 24 years at Abernathy MacGregor, the last eight as president, is moving full-time to Europe. He will still be affiliated with the firm in a consulting role.



**Carina Davidson**

**Edelman** has appointed **Susan Isenberg**, currently the firm's client lead for Johnson & Johnson, global sector chair, health. She succeeds Kym White, who left the firm in March to join biotech company Vertex. Prior to heading the Johnson & Johnson account, Isenberg was global vice chair for the health sector, overseeing the U.S. Before that, she was managing director for the health and consumer marketing divisions in Edelman's New York office.

**PROI Worldwide** has named **Clare Parsons** global chairman, the first time a woman has chaired the global communications partnership. Parsons chairs London-based communications agency Lansons, which she co-founded in 1989. She succeeds Richard Tsang, founder of Hong Kong-based agency Strategic Public Relations Group, who was appointed to the role in 2016. PROI Worldwide has also appointed three women agency owners—Cocomms managing partner **Kaija Pohjala**, Senate SHJ managing partner **Angela Scaffidi** and 360PR+ CEO **Laura Tomasetti**—as vice-chairs. All three are now members of PROI Worldwide's International Board of Directors.



**Clare Parsons**

**NJF PR** has named **Jen Fruzzetti** vice president. Fruzzetti joins NJF from Hunter Public Relations where she was a VP on some of the agency's largest accounts including Amazon and Smithfield. Prior to Hunter PR, she was an assistant VP at Nike Communications, developing integrated communications programs and executing over 40 large-scale red carpet events.

**Spark** has added **Olga Orda** to its executive team as senior vice president and has brought on **Chuck Thegze** as vice president of new business. Orda was a founder of global online marketplace PitchPen, and has held positions at Infinium Systems and FTI Consulting. Thegze has been an associate creative director at both Chiat/Day and FCB Global, as well as serving as an editor at Hearst and Time Warner and a reporter at the *New York Times*.

**Dix & Eaton** has hired **Bailey Wells** as an assistant vice president. Wells comes to Dix & Eaton from Beam Suntory in Chicago, where she managed global spirits brands including Hornitos tequila and Courvoisier cognac. Prior to that she held positions at Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications and Big Fuel, where she led departments of digital and social media marketers.

## MERCURY PA TO TALK FOR TURKS

Mercury Public Affairs is providing strategic media relations, influencer engagement, issues/crisis management and digital services to the Embassy of Turkey under an eight-month contract worth nearly \$900K.

The US and Turkey relationship has been strained due to the crackdown by president Recep Tayyip Erdogan against the media and political opponents as well as American support for Kurdish forces fighting in Syria.

Mercury, part of Omnicom, organizes events at the Embassy, trains spokespeople, pitches national media and provides a daily media report of Turkey-related news.

The firm also supports PR activity of Turkish consul generals in Boston, New York, Miami, Chicago, Houston and Los Angeles.

It receives a monthly retainer of \$108,333 under the contract that went into effect May 1.

The agreement does not include social media work, which would be negotiated quarterly and billed separately.

## GUN GROUP LOCKS IN LOBBYING SUPPORT

Gun trade group the National Shooting Sports Foundation has retained D.C. lobbying firm Hollier & Associates for Capitol Hill advocacy work on banking issues as they affect the firearms industry.

Smaller and lesser-known than the National Rifle Association, the NSSF represents firearms manufacturers, distributors and dealers, as well as shooting ranges and organizations, with a total membership of about 11,000.

The retainer comes as the financial sector has emerged as an unlikely voice in the current gun debate.

Citigroup in March announced it would bar its business clients from selling guns to customers who haven't passed a background check and are under the age of 21, and would also refuse to do business with any company that sells high-capacity magazines and bump stocks.

Following in Citigroup's footsteps, Bank of America in April announced it would no longer finance manufacturers that make "military-style firearms" for "non-law enforcement, non-military use."

BOA seemed to walk back on its pledge when it agreed to provide more than \$43 million in financing to Remington Outdoor Co., which is climbing its way out of bankruptcy and manufactures rifles with the very semiautomatic designs the bank said it would no longer finance.

BlackRock, the world's largest investment company, unveiled products allowing clients to avoid investing in funds involving companies that sell or make firearms.

An April 30 *Wall Street Journal* report showed how banks and credit card companies are also exploring ways to identify gun purchases in their payment systems.

Managing the NSSF account is Hollier president Will Hollier, who was formerly chief of staff and legislative director to Senator and Senate Banking Committee chairman Mike Crapo (R-Idaho).



## WCD VISIONARY AWARDS PROMOTE DIVERSITY

WomenCorporateDirectors Foundation presented its 2018 Visionary Awards on May 9 in New York City. The awards dinner, hosted by "Inside Edition" anchor Deborah Norville, was part of WCD's Global Institute, which took place from May 8-10.



**Visionary Awards emcee Deborah Norville**

The awards, which honor corporations and individuals that are increasing diversity in the boardroom, were presented to NextEra Energy U.S. chairman and CEO Jim Robo; Dot Foods executive chairman John Tracy; Canadian National Railway directors Ede Holliday and Laura Stein; WCD co-founder and chair emeritus Susan Stautberg; and minister counselor for commercial affairs—ASEAN Maggie Hanson-Muse.

The selection committee for the awards, which was co-chaired by Homeownership Preservation Foundation director Jill Kanin-Lovers and Alpha Wealth Advisors founder and managing principal Joan Steel, included former Playboy Enterprises CEO Christie Hefner and Templeton & Company partner and managing director Pat McKay.

"If we were going to make a difference, it would have to be at the board first, and the board was where we started," Tracy told the crowd. "We tried to take that all the way through the organization."

"Female Talent, power and opportunity are still underutilized," Stautberg said in her remarks. "We need more women directors who are both constructive and help others to succeed."

WCD has nearly 2400 members, serving over 8500 corporate boards with 80 chapters across six continents.

## MEDIA MANEUVERS

**Sinclair Broadcast Group** has sold seven of its TV stations to 21st Century Fox, at a price of \$910 million. Six of the stations that Fox is acquiring are already Fox TV network affiliates. The deal is part of an effort by Sinclair to scale back its holdings as it works to gain regulatory approval of a \$4.6 billion merger with Tribune Media.

**Gannett's** growth in digital advertising/subscriptions could not overcome the downturn in print and circulation, resulting in a \$377K first-quarter deficit. Digital ad revenues increased nine percent to \$255.5M, about 35 percent of total revenue. Print advertising plunged 17.2 percent quarter and circulation sales dipped five percent. Gannett's total revenue declined 7.2 percent to \$723M.

**John Skipper**, who resigned as ESPN president last December following what he said were extortion threats from his cocaine dealer, has been named executive chairman of the streaming sports media company Perform Group. Skipper will oversee all of the UK-based company's operations and strategy and report to the firm's board. Simon Denyer, Perform Group's founder, will remain the company's CEO.



**John Skipper**

## **VICTORIA DESIRES PR MATE**

The Australian state of Victoria is looking for a PR partner to handle PR in the US and Australia to promote its role as host of Melbourne International Games Week, which is slated for Oct. 20-28.

MIGW is the largest games event in the Asia-Pacific realm, connecting consumer, business and educational games events. More than 70K people took part in the 2017 MIGW.



Victoria is home to Australia's digital games sector, accounting for 53 percent of the country's games employment and more than 130 development studios.

Victoria's Dept. of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources wants a firm for a four-month PR push with an option to extend into 2019. The firm will organize a Visiting Journalists' Program, pitch national/business/trade press, manage social media (Facebook/Twitter) and organize events.

Deadline for proposals is May 28. Work begins July 1. Submissions go to [games@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:games@ecodev.vic.gov.au).

Fran Kerlin at [fran.kerlin@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:fran.kerlin@ecodev.vic.gov.au) and +61 0400113925 is answering questions about the RFQ.

## **BGR SIGNS SOMALIA**

BGR Government Affairs has inked a \$35K monthly pact to represent war-torn Somalia before the Trump Administration, Congress, media and policy community.

The Trump White House has stepped up drone strikes in Somalia, which does not have a functional government, according to the May 9 *Politico*.

BGR is the firm of former Mississippi Governor and Republican National Committee chairman Haley Barbour. The firm's contract with Somalia began May 1 and runs through 2019.

BGR joins another well-connected Republican, ex-New York Senator Al D'Amato, on the Somalia lobbying team. D'Amato's Park Strategies signed a \$10K monthly contract with Somalia last November.



**Haley Barbour**

## **HEARST ROLLS 'PAY-PER-ARTICLE' SYSTEM**

Hearst Newspapers is entering the pay-per-article world by launching a system that allows advertisers to tie their messages to "hand-selected" stories.

Hearst says the service will focus on breaking news.

Under the service, advertisers could pick key words, as well as set the type of breaking news stories with which they want their ads to appear.

The system is currently testing at websites affiliated with several Hearst papers, including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Antonio Express-News*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and *Connecticut Post*.

The ads take the form of what SolidOpinion calls promoted headlines, a line of copy that runs immediately above a story's headline.

## **FUTURE SUCCESS TAKES THE RIGHT PEOPLE**

"Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there."

This quote from Will Rogers is a warning to today's business owners. What got you where you are today is often not enough to ensure you'll be successful tomorrow.

As rbb embraced its aggressive growth plans to double in size by 2020, we knew those plans required broader shoulders.

That's why we invested in growing our leadership team over the last decade and are excited that nine senior members have become equity partners at the agency.

These new partners not only believe in rbb's ability to grow, they understand that what has worked before is not the roadmap for the future. The trains coming down the communications track are moving faster than ever.

Those companies who embrace technology, understand the changing information needs of today's consumer and are flexible enough to bring the right tools to each situation are the ones who will succeed.

Brands require and deserve a 360-degree view of how to use communication to build their bottom line. Today that means using video, third-party influencers, apps galore, crowdsourcing and employee engagement tools.

That doesn't mean the focus is all internet and apps. Being able to put experienced, thoughtful, senior executives in the same room with CEOs, COOs and CMOs and give them straight counsel is just as critical.

We can only imagine what will be in our communications arsenal tomorrow. With a leadership team aligned for the future, rbb expects to help clients stay on track and take the curves with flair.

*Christine M. Barney, APR, is chief executive officer and managing partner of rbb Communications. She is also author of the Breakout Brand strategy, is accredited by the Public Relations Society of America and oversees the strategic development of all client programs.*



**Christine M. Barney**

## **LEWIS CLIMBS ABOARD BLUE ENGINE**

Kevin Lewis, an aide to President Obama, has joined Blue Engine Message & Media, the non-partisan strategic communications shop.



**Kevin Lewis**

He joins from Obama's staff, where as chief spokesperson he shaped the post-White House agenda of the former president and sorted out the various demands from media.

Lewis joined the Obama campaign in 2007, served in the White House and handled spokesperson duties for Attorneys General Eric Holder and Loretta Lynch.

Erik Smith, founder of Blue Engine and advertising/messaging guru for the Obama-Biden campaigns, said Lewis will help clients build their brands and protect their reputations.

## **MAKING COMPLEX COMMUNICATIONS CLEAR**

A PR pro's role has never been more critical. It's a complex time for communicators, but we must avoid the trap of transferring that to the people and organizations we serve.

There's never been a communications challenge that didn't require changing opinions and behaviors of multiple groups of people, all with different interests and motivations. One message to get them all on board is wishful thinking. Instead, we need key message sets for each audience that all roll up under a common narrative.

At Padilla, we use a Message Pyramid that starts with a core theme or idea (what execs mistakenly refer to as "the message"), an elevator story (often termed "the narrative"), key message sets (organized by audience or topic), and proof statements (reasons to believe).

Aristotle coined the words ethos, pathos and logos to categorize the three main persuasive methods. Ethos focuses on experience, pathos focuses on passion and logos focuses on logic.



**Matt Kucharski**

C-Suite executives love ethos messages: talking about years of experience, market share, breadth and depth of product offerings, and other key points that demonstrate authority and longevity.

The problem is, people don't care. Customers don't want breadth and depth of product line; they want products specifically for their needs.

When ethos messaging doesn't apply, we fall back on logos messaging, citing scientific studies and test results.

But as Richard Thaler, winner of the Nobel Prize for his work in behavioral economics has proved, it's often our emotions that drive decision making, which has resulted in more need for messaging based on pathos.

A "single message" is not only unrealistic, it's also ineffective. Instead, we need to be using a mix of ethos, pathos and logos-based messaging, choosing the right mix with the help of research-based audience insights.

In contrast to "the message," very few executives point to "the messenger" as a key part of the strategy, assuming it as a given or dismissing it as unimportant.

But a great message will be squandered if delivered by the wrong messenger.

And then there's the method. We all know the PESO model, where an "integrated" campaign is supposed to have paid, earned, shared and owned channels.

The problem is, the PESO model isn't like choosing a sandwich at the deli: pick your bread, pick your meat and cheese, pick your condiments, warm it up or take it cold. It's about picking the method of communication that is going to achieve the most effective outcome.

So, when the CEO tells you that the company needs your help in communicating a major initiative, instead of discussing the complexity of the challenge, break it down into the Message, the Messenger and the Method. Not only will he or she appreciate your ability to simplify the complex, you'll improve the likelihood that communications is seen as an essential part of the company's success.

*Matt Kucharski is President of Padilla.*

## **AKIN GUMP REPS OMAN OVER STEEL TARIFFS**

Law and lobbying giant Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld will represent Oman's Ministry of Commerce and Industry as the Arabian Peninsula country seeks an exemption from President Trump's recently-imposed steel tariffs.

Trump in March slapped a 25 percent tariff on steel imports and a 10 percent tariff on aluminum imports as part of a series of tariffs he imposed on imported goods.



The move drew rebukes from China as well as resounding criticism from Trump's fellow conservatives.

The order, which went into effect March 23, currently exempts Canada and Mexico and allows the possibility of future exemptions to other countries as well.

Akin Gump will provide the Omani government counsel regarding its efforts to obtain an exemption from these tariffs, and will conduct outreach to U.S. government officials for the same purpose, according to documents filed with the Justice Department.

The pact, which was signed in April, runs until July and fetches Akin Gump \$120,000.

## **GOLDSTEIN SIGNS ON AT SOLOMON MCCOWN**

Jan Goldstein has joined Solomon McCown & Company to lead the Boston-based agency's Mission, Education and Healthcare practice.



**Jan Goldstein**

Goldstein joins Solomon McCown from the Girl Scouts, where she was chief marketing officer for the organization's Eastern Massachusetts Council. Prior to that, she was marketing and communications director for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston and a strategic communications director for national service nonprofit City Year.

At Solomon McCown, Goldstein will oversee a client roster that includes foundations, secondary schools, colleges and universities, human service providers, physicians' groups, insurers, home health companies, public agencies and medical journals.

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

**APCO Worldwide** has opened an office in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The new office expands the agency's presence in the Middle East and North Africa region, where it already has offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Liam Leduc Clarke, a 15-year APCO veteran, will be the office's first managing director. APCO's Saudi unit will offer full digital, media, creative and high-level business and management consulting capabilities.

**Weber Shandwick** has opened an owned office in Bogotá, Colombia, to further expand its presence in Latin America. The new office is a partnership with fellow Interpublic advertising and marketing agency McCann. The firm's network in Latin America now includes offices in Colombia, Brazil and Mexico, as well as affiliates in Argentina, Chile and Peru. Paula Restrepo has been named managing director and will lead operations in the Bogotá office.

## COMMENTARY

### AT&T DIALS WRONG PR NUMBER

What was AT&T, the bluest of the blue-chips thinking? The telecommunications giant paid \$600K to the shell company of Michael Cohen, personal injury lawyer and Donald Trump's fixer, for insights into and understanding of the new administration.

Following news of the payment, Ma Bell made it plain that none of the money that it paid Essential Consultants in 2017 was used for legal work or lobbying.

It's good that AT&T cleared that up, though Essential Consultants is hardly a legal or lobbying powerhouse.

In fact, it is the firm that Cohen established to pay \$130K to former porn star Stormy Daniels, who allegedly had sex with Donald Trump in 2006.

The telecommunications company isn't the only entity to tap into the apparent savvy of Essential Consultants, which has Cohen as its sole employee.

Russian oligarch Viktor Vekselberg, who has a close relationship with Vladimir Putin, is linked to Columbus Nova, a firm that paid \$500K to Essential Consultants for services regarding potential sources of capital and real estate investments.

AT&T is trying to seal its \$85B acquisition of Time Warner, a deal opposed by the Trump Administration. A judge will rule on the deal June 12.

Trump has been in the public spotlight for eons. What unique "insights" did AT&T expect to get from Cohen? The Trump Administration is not exactly a complex organization.

The payment to Essential Consultants sure looks like a pay-for-play move.

At the very least, it was lousy PR.

### WOUNDED NRA HEADS NORTH

The National Rifle Assn. selected former Marine Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, key figure of the Iran-Contra scandal, as its next president. He immediately played the victim card, saying the organization is under "frontal assault" by gun control crazies.

North, a board member of the NRA, was the central figure in the Iran-Contra scandal of the 1980s, which involved the diversion of proceeds earned from the illegal sale of weapons to Iran to Contra rebels fighting the Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua—illegal under the Boland Amendment.

He pledged to "counterpunch" gun control advocates, such as the kids who survived the Parkland, Florida school massacre or families of the 30,000 Americans who are die from gunshots each year.

The combative North is the perfect spokesperson to fill the big shoes of the legendary actor Charlton Heston, who once served as the feisty face of the NRA.

Wayne LaPierre, executive VP and CEO of the NRA,

made that point when he said the selection of North is the "most exciting news for NRA members since Charlton Heston become our president."

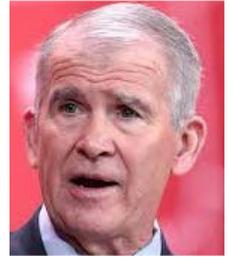
Times though are a changing.

A CNN poll following the February Parkland shooting found that more than 70 percent of Americans want tough gun laws, up from 52 percent in an October survey after the Las Vegas massacre.

More than half (52 percent) strongly support gun control, which outpaces those who strongly oppose tough gun laws by a four-to-one margin.

LaPierre said the NRA reached out to North because he's the "warrior amongst our board." Ollie has quite a fight on his hand.

—Kevin McCauley



Oliver North

### TRUMP STYLE INFECTS ENTIRE WHITE HOUSE

The latest dustup over White House leaks regarding a tasteless comment made by Kelly Sadler about John McCain shows that not only is Trump unmoored from typical norms of presidential decency and decorum, his style has spread around the White House like measles.

Chief of Staff John Kelly was the first to come down with a case of lack of empathy when he got into a contest with a Florida congresswoman last October, saying, "he would not apologize for the false attacks he leveled against Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.) . . . when he sought to defend President Trump for his handling of a condolence call to the widow of a fallen soldier," according to the *Washington Post*.

Kelly is likely on his way out of the White House and should be able to reset his moral compass easily.

But that leaves others to carry out The Boss's wishes. AXIOS has reported that Mercedes Schlapp, a Republican lobbyist wife who carries the title, "strategic communications director," staunchly defended Sadler during Huckabee Sanders' dressing down of the communications staff.

As POLITICO's "Playbook" e-newsletter asked on May 13:

"How are there two sides to this story? A war hero with a family is struggling with an aggressive form of brain cancer. Why can't the White House find a way to move on from this extraordinarily embarrassing incident?"

How are there two sides to this story? Because in Trump World, with its heavy reliance on "alternate facts" and constant shaping of inconvenient facts into convenient lies and misrepresentations, there is no objective truth.

I, for one, would just like to make the White House Honest Again.

Bill Huey is president of Strategic Communications.