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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

**The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
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VIRGINIA RAIL NARROWS SEARCH

Virginia Railway Express, the commuter line that ties Washington, D.C., to the Virginia suburbs, has narrowed a review of its six-figure PR and advertising pact to three firms.

Burson-Marsteller, Pulsar Advertising and Sparky's Garage, will compete as finalists for the railway's account, valued at \$200K/year.

VRE, established 19 years ago, carries about 18,500 passengers each work-day via 18 stations.

Alexandria-based Williams Whittle Associates is winding down a pact through the end of the VRE's fiscal year. It has worked with the railway for the past six years.



KEKST PARTNER EXITS FOR JOELE FRANK

Michael Freitag, a partner at Kekst and Company who led the firm's restructuring and reorganization practice, has moved to rival Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher as a partner.

Freitag joined Kekst in 1990 after working as a copy boy and reporter-in-training at the *New York Times*, including a stint as news clerk to columnist and executive editor Abe Rosenthal.

His high-profile assignments at Kekst included the collapse of Enron and the Supreme Court's reversal of Arthur Andersen's criminal conviction, as well as bankruptcy efforts for companies like Kmart, Blockbuster, General Motors, W.R. Grace and Owens-Corning.

Kekst is owned by Publicis. JFWBK is independent.



Freitag

PN's HAYES STEPS INTO DEBUONO'S SHOES

Porter Novelli has tapped Susan Hayes for the global healthcare spot, a practice that includes Pfizer, Bayer, Johnson & Johnson and Merck.

She takes over for Barbara DeBuono, the former New York State Commissioner of Health who exited to helm Orbis International, a \$100M non-profit group that promotes eye care through the developing world.



Hayes

Hayes, who returned to Omnicom unit PN a year ago, is a veteran of S. Hayes Consulting, Cooney Waters and WPP's Ogilvy & Mather.

FD REVENUE UP 7.3% IN Q1

FTI Consulting reported first quarter revenue at its strategic communications division, FD, rose 7.3 percent to \$46.4M over 2010 on "modest" U.S. and U.K. client growth and stronger project work in Asia and the U.S.

Overall, the business consulting combine posted a 3.3% increase in revenue for Q1 to \$361.8M while net income surged nearly 54% to \$21.8M.

President and CEO Jack Dunn said bankruptcy and restructuring business remained soft, but its other operations, like FD, M&A and technology consulting accounted for 9.5 percent growth.

The company said FD has 586 revenue-generating staffers.

The firm was the top M&A PR advisor for Q1 based on volume of deals, according to mergermarket, as it counseled 47 transactions during the period worth \$66.4B, edging out rival Brunswick Group (41).

During the quarter, FTI acquired certain European operations of global consulting firm LECG Corp. They included LECG's competition policy practice, financial advisory services unit and tax consultancy group

FTI also spent \$209.4M buying back stock during Q1 and is slated to retire five million shares.

B-M TAPS TRAVATELLO

Burson-Marsteller has hired Lisa Travatello for the global consumer and brand marketing chair and creative director spot at the WPP unit.

Travatello joins from Interpublic's Current Lifestyle Marketing operation, where she held the executive VP and curator of creativity position.

Travatello, who has more than 25 years of marketing communications experience, becomes a member of B-M's business operations team of top executives. She reports to Mark Penn, CEO.



Travatello

At Current, Travatello handled clients such as Travel Alberta, Clorox, Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (an account currently under review), Bali Intimate Apparel and Weleda.

Previously, she was at another IPG unit, Weber Shandwick, as chief creative officer and executive VP of consumer marketing. She counseled General Motors, Unilever and Ocean Spray.

Travatello did stints at Porter Novelli (Omnicom), Edelman, and Ogilvy PR (WPP).

She also was PR coordinator for Pittsburgh's Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

SPRINT CULTIVATES GRASSROOTS VIA WM

Sprint Nextel Corp., which is fighting the proposed \$39B AT&T takeover of T-Mobile USA, has added Weber Merritt to its PR arsenal.

The firm headed by Qorvis Communications founding partners Jim Weber and Bernie Merritt “shows that Sprint is serious and willing to spend to fight the merger,” by hiring a “top-flight firm,”

according to a report in *The Hill* of May 5.



at&t

Sprint



T-Mobile

that an AT&T hook-up with T-Mobile

would create a “Ma Bell duopoly” composed of wireless giants AT&T and Verizon.

Grassroots specialist WM joins the Sprint PR team of APCO Worldwide and Abernathy MacGregor Group.

On the lobbying front, Sprint has just added Thorsen French Advocacy to its roster.

James French was counsel to the House Judiciary Committee, while Carlyle Thorsen served as deputy assistant attorney general at the Justice Dept. and counsel to former Texas Rep. Tom Delay.

Sprint spent \$2.5M for lobbying during 2010. First-quarter 2011 outlays are put at \$583K for shops such as Fierce, Isakowitz & Blalock and Mehlman Vogel Castagnetti.

AT&T shelled out \$15.3M to lobbying firms last year, and \$6.8M during this year’s first quarter.

Beneficiaries of AT&T largess are Quinn Gillespie, Cassidy & Assocs., Patton Boggs via Breaux Lott Leadership Group and Prime Policy Group.

STORY ORGANIZES TORNADO RELIEF

D.C. PR firm Story Partners is helping to organize a May 10 capital benefit for Alabama victims of tornadoes that ravaged the south late last month.

We Are Alabama An evening to help the victims of the recent storms.



The charity event is slated for the rooftop of Van Scoyoc Associates on Constitution Avenue and includes among its honorary hosts, Sen. Jeff Sessions and Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), as well as members of the state’s House delegation.

SP, the year-old firm of veteran strategist Gloria Dittus, a native Alabaman, said the event will benefit the Governor’s Emergency Relief Fund,

Univ. of Alabama Acts of Kindness Fund, and the American Red Cross.

Alabama was hit the hardest of six states ravaged by tornadoes that left more than 330 dead, 230 in the Yellowhammer State. Damages are expected to exceed \$2 billion there, Reuters reported this week.

In addition to VSA and SP, other hosts hail from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Crossroads Strategies, Wexler-Walker and the Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S.

Donations range from \$50 up to \$10,000.

The event will run from 6 to 8 p.m. RSVP: rsvp[at]storypartnersdc[dot]com. Info: storypartners.com.

US IMMIGRATION SEEKS MEDIA MONITOR

The public affairs unit for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is looking for input from vendors to handle its media monitoring

“Due to the high profile nature of the ICE mission, ICE related stories remain prominently featured by media outlets,” reads a request for information published by the division of the Dept. of Homeland Security which handles investigations and removals of illegal immigrants.



The PA unit said it intends to outsource its daily morning news briefing and media monitoring of print and broadcast reports involving the agency and its scope of interest.

Interested vendors are asked to submit a capabilities statement. Information is at this link.

ICE’s public affairs unit pulled the plug on an RFP for strategic communications support earlier this year, choosing to perform the work in-house.

JT&A GETS ILLINOIS EXTENSION

The Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity has picked up an \$800K option on Jasculca Terman & Associates’ PR contract as the state agency bides time to develop an RFP.

JT&A won the business with a \$2.4M pact in 2007.

The DCO includes several entities, including the state’s offices for film, business development and trade and investment, among others.

The extension runs through the end of the year and the state agency said it will be putting the pact out for bids later this year. In justifying the extension, DCEO officials reported that they tried calling several PR firms to gauge current rates but were rebuffed. They said JT&A’s rates were compared with other state PR pacts and found to be competitive.

The Prairie State’s Finance Authority has also reupped PR pacts with Marj Halperin Consulting (\$75K) and Hill & Knowlton (\$40K).

MMG DEFENDS COLORADO TOURISM PR

New York-based MMG Mardiks has defended a review of the Colorado Tourism Office’s PR account, following an RFP process that began in January.

The CTO announced firms to handle five of its marketing contracts on three-year pacts. MMG has handled the account since October 2006.

Chuck Mardiks, CEO of the firm, said he is “thrilled” to continue the work.

In addition to MMG Mardiks, the CTO tapped Karsh/Hagan, Denver, as its lead brand agency, Miles/Weaver, also of Denver, will handle two pacts – publishing its visitors’ guide and guiding interactive content – and U.K.-based Cellet Travel Services Limited works marketing for the U.K. and Ireland. Richard Scarf, chairman of the CTO’s board, said the bid process was “extremely competitive.”



Photo: CTO

CBS NEWS PICKS PELLEY

CBS News on May 3 named "60 Minutes" correspondent Scott Pelley anchor of its nightly news broadcast effective June. 6.

He succeeds Katie Couric in the anchor chair.

In announcing the appointment, CBS News chairman Jeff Fager said Pelley has the experience, credibility and ranks "among the very best reporters ever to work at CBS News."



Pelley

Most recently at "60 Minutes," Pelley reported on the earthquake and tsunami that wrecked Japan and the mass murder in Tucson that wounded Rep. Gabby Giffords. He has interviewed President George W. Bush, Federal Reserve Board chairman Ben Bernanke, Iran President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Afghan leader Hamid Karzai.

Pelley was chief White House correspondent for CBS and spent a year in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during the Persian Gulf crisis. He then reported from Baghdad.

Prior to joining CBS, Pelley was producer/reporter for WFAA-TV (Dallas/Fort Worth) and KSEL-TV (Lubbock). He began in journalism as a copyboy at the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*.

Pelley will continue to file reports for "60 Minutes" after taking the seat at the re-named "CBS Evening News with Scott Pelley."

AOL'S NET DIVES 86%

AOL has reported an 86 plunge in Q1 net income to \$4.7M on a 17 percent decline in revenues to \$551M.



Armstrong

CEO Tim Armstrong says the quarter marked an "important milestone in the turnaround of AOL" as global display revenues grew for the first time since the final quarter of 2007.

Display ads were up four percent to \$130M. Total ad revenues sank 11 percent to \$314M.

Subscription revenues were down 24 percent to \$215M. There was a 2.5 percent monthly churn rate among subscribers.

Armstrong completed the acquisition of The Huffington Post during the quarter, installing Arianna Huffington as editor-in-chief of the AOL Huffington Post Media Group.

AOL took at \$27.8M charge related to the HuffPo deal and restructuring of operations in India. The company has \$380M in cash.

Armstrong says AOL remains focused on accelerating its momentum to become the "premier digital content company."

WAPO LOSES PAIR

Nancy Kerr, features digital editor, at the *Washington Post*, is leaving the paper May 13 for *USA Today*, where she will be editor of the Gannett property's "Your Life" feature.

YL will cover mental/physical health, wellness, par-

enting and relationships, according to a WaPo memo to staffers.

Kerr joined the paper in 2004 as editorial director of jobs, cars and real estate. Her focus shifted online to help manage style, food, travel, books and home & gardening coverage.

She joined the Post from America Online, where she handled women's programming.

Wes Kosova, political editor, has also left the Post for *Bloomberg Businessweek*.

His last day at the paper was May 6.

MCGRATH STEPS DOWN FROM MTV

Judy McGrath, CEO of MTV Networks, has stepped down after a seven-year stint. Viacom has announced that it doesn't plan to name a successor to the 58-year-old McGrath, the architect of MTV's success. She was with MTV since its 1981 launch.

Viacom President and Chief Executive Officer Philippe Dauman called McGrath the "creative heart and inspiring soul of MTV Networks."

She "deservedly has been associated with so much of the great entertainment, cultural relevance, social significance and business success that have defined our media networks over the years."



McGrath

McGrath's lieutenants including Doug Herzog, president of MTNN entertainment group; Van Toffler, president of MTVN music and logo group and Cyma Zaghani, president of Nickelodeon & MTVN kids and family group now report to Dauman.

McGrath says she leaves with MTV's brands and businesses in wonderful financial shape. She wants to "thank my friends and colleagues on the senior team who will continue to lead a kick-ass organization."

AFP NAILS OSAMA PIX HOAX

Agence France-Presse said its recently installed forensic software to detect manipulated images nailed a photo of a purportedly dead Osama bin Laden, first aired in Pakistan and was then used throughout the world, as a hoax.

AFP is the only global news service to use the Tungstene system, according to a statement released by the French company.

The image interpretation software combs through data contained in digital images to detect tampering. Through a suite of filters, it identifies "tell-tale discrepancies in pixels and analyses harmonization of light and color."

AFP, according to PR staffer Maud Forlini, has a specialist unit in its photo department to trace suspected manipulations of photos. Fingered photos get the Tungstene treatment that was created by former criminology expert Roger Cozien.

AFP has installed the software at its regional editorial centers in Paris, Hong Kong and Washington.

The image of a bloodied man said to be bin Laden has been circulating on the Internet for the past two years.

MEDIA NEWS continued**VIEIRA EXITS 'TODAY'**

NBC News announced May 9 that Meredith Vieira, co-anchor of "Today" is leaving in June after a five-year stint to spend more time with her family.

Ann Curry, news anchor since 1997, takes over for the 57-year-old Vieira, who will assume another yet unnamed position.

Steve Capus, NBC News president, credits Vieira for making "an indelible imprint on morning television."

Curry has been anchor of "Dateline NBC" since 2005 and is substitute anchor for "NBC News with Brian Williams."

Her "Today" news anchor spot goes to Natalie Morales, who joined the program in 2006 as national correspondent.



Curry pictured in a 2010 NBC holiday promotional photo.

FIVE PIECES UP FOR TOP MAG HONORS

Five investigative journalism pieces are up for the top award in the "Reporting" category of the American Society of Magazine Editors on Monday night in New York.

The sold-out event, taking place at 583 Park Ave., an event space formerly owned by a church, will be hosted by outgoing CBS News anchor Katie Couric.

The five journalists and their pieces are:

"The Guantanamo Suicides" by Scott Horton, which appeared in the March *Harper's Magazine*.

"The Desert War," about the revolt in Yemen by Robert Worth, *New York Times Magazine*.

"Covert Operations" by Jane Mayer who profiled the political activities of the billionaire Koch Brothers for *The New Yorker*.

"The Runaway General," a story in *Rolling Stone* by Michael Hastings that led to the resignation of General Stanley McChrystal

"Digging Out," an essay and photos by Elliott Woods about the rich store of minerals in Afghanistan that appeared in the *Virginia Quarterly Review*.

This will be the first time that the ASME has presented the awards at a dinner.

Multiple Awards

New Yorker writers are up for nine awards.

Other multiple nominations are *New York Times* magazine, *New York* magazine, and the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, six each; *GQ*, five; *The Atlantic*, four, and *Esquire*, *Real Simple*, *W*, *Los Angeles*, and *Wired*, three each.

Winners will receive Ellies — reproductions of the Alexander Calder stabile "Elephant."

Sid Holt, CEO, singled out the Hastings and Mayer articles as journalism that made news while covering the news.

Other articles, including those that focused on the failure of the criminal justice system, the impact of autism, and conflicts around the globe, made for an "extraordinary year for magazines," he said.

OWN DROPS NORMAN

Christiana Norman has been ousted as CEO of Oprah Winfrey's OWN cable network after a four-month stint.

She has been replaced on an interim basis by Peter Liguori, COO at Discovery Communications and partner in the venture with Winfrey.

OWN has generated lackluster ratings since its launch, barely topping the performance of Discovery Health, which it replaced.

Winfrey credited Norman for helping to introduce the network, but now sees the need for a "different kind of leadership for the next phase of OWN's growth."

Liguori served as president of Fox Broadcasting Corp. and promises OWN will have more entertaining fare than its current steady diet of "how-to" programs.

OWN is expected to receive a major jolt with the debut of a talk show from Rosie O'Donnell in October and Winfrey's "Oprah's Next Chapter" program in 2012.

RAVENS PR STAFF, JETS' RYAN HONORED

The Baltimore Ravens' nine-member PR staff won the annual Rozelle Award from the Professional Football Writers of America, which also honored New York Jets Head Coach Rex Ryan.

The PR team, led by senior VP of public and community relations Kevin Byrne, won the award for the first time. It is named after former NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle and goes to "the public relations department that consistently strived for excellence in its dealings and relationships with the media," according to the sportswriters' group.



Ryan

Byrne, a 32-year NFL veteran, pens the Ravens blog "The Byrne Identity" and has been with the franchise — the former Cleveland Browns — for 32 years. He was previously director of PA for TWA during the late 1970s and early '80s.

The Houston Texans' PR staff was honored last year, its third win since 2004.

New York Jets head coach and media favorite Rex Ryan won the PFWA's Horrigan Award, which goes to a person (not a player or PR staffer) whose "qualities and professional style helped the media best do its job last season."

Ryan took the Jets to the AFC Championship game and produced a ream of headlines along the way.

The football writers group gave their annual Good Guy Award to Super Bowl-winning quarterback Aaron Rodgers of the Green Bay Packers.

Eddy Hartenstein, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, has been named president/CEO of Tribune Co., parent of the paper.

The former chief of DirectTV was part of a four-member executive council responsible for Tribune's operations following the October exit of CEO Randy Michaels. That council has now been dismantled.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS

MSL TARGETS 'HIPSTERS' AND 'EMOS'

MSLGroup said it will interview young New York concertgoers among "long lines of emo, hip-hop or hipster subcultures snaking around city blocks awaiting entry to today's hottest concerts" as part of a polling and research initiative dubbed MSL On Queue.

The Publicis unit said lines of people waiting to enter shows represent "a resource of brutally honest opinions about their products and information on the day's latest trends."

MSL VP Brian Williams is manager of the service, which he called a "rapid, efficient and cost-effective" look at audiences.

HOLAHAN SETS UP SHOP

Betsy Holahan, who was communications director for the Senate Budget Committee under New Hampshire's Judd Gregg (R), has established Great Point Strategies in Alexandria, Va.



Holahan

Gregg, who retired from the Senate in 2010, said in a statement he relied on her knack of crafting and delivering the "right message to the right audience."

Holahan was spokeswoman and senior PA advisor at the Treasury Dept. during the recent Bush administration and press secretary to ex-Sen. Pat Roberts.

Great Point, which gets its name from a 326-year-old lighthouse on Nantucket, offers communications strategy/implementation, message development, PR, media relations, media training and crisis management.

MAKOVSKY NAMES DIGITAL LEADERS

Makovsky + Company has bolstered its digital practice with a hire and promotion in two leadership posts at the independent firm.

Reginald Christian, a 20-year creative pro previously with Time Warner, McCann and DDB, was named digital creative director to develop branded digital efforts and head social media policy and education for the independent firm.

Daniel Scholz, a senior A/E at the firm and formerly with The Actors Fund, was tapped as director of digital media.



Christian, Scholz

BRIEFS: ICR, Norwalk, Conn., reps Teavana Holdings, the specialty retailer for tea products which said April 28 it plans to go public in a \$100M IPO.

...Santa Monica, Calif.-based **Addo**

Communications counsels Boingo Wireless, the Los Angeles-based Wi-Fi service provider which went public last week with a \$77.9M IPO that fell flat as shares dropped 10%. ... **McGuireWoods**

Consulting, Washington, D.C., formed a crisis and litigation communications practice led by former Virginia Attorney General Jerry Kilgore and Mark Hubbard, a former anchor/reporter with NBC's Richmond, Va., affiliate WWBT-12.

NEW ACCOUNTS

New York Area

Susan Magrino Agency, New York/Hyatt Regency

New Orleans Hotel, slated to re-open in the fall, and Smashburger, eatery chain set to open its first New York City restaurant in June in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, both for media relations. The firm has also been named AOR for women's health media company EmpowHER Media overseeing all media relations for the company and founder Michelle King Robson, with a team of five assigned to the business.

President/COO Allyn Magrino oversees that account.

Edelman, New York/Volkswagen Group of America, as social media agency of record, following a competitive RFP process. Key focus is Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and the carmaker's network of blogs. Edelman picked up PR AOR duties for Volkswagen in January.



EmpowerHER.com



East

Rhodes Communications, Norfolk, Va./Altus Positioning Systems, surveying instruments based on satellite technology, for PR.

Southeast

TransMedia Group, Boca Raton, Fla./Sun Radio Network, for media relations and social media covering South Florida initially, where the company recently relocated, later to expand PR nationally.

Southwest

TrizCom, Dallas/North Dallas Honey Company, for media relations.

Sammis & Ochoa, San Antonio/"San Antonio Rising Stars," KLYP-AM and online radio show, as AOR for PR.

Mountain West

Metzger Associates, Boulder, Colo./Coalfire Systems, IT audit and compliance firm, to develop and manage a national marketing and communications program.

West

Hayter Communications, Port Orchard, Wash./Smith Optics, as AOR for PR to manage all editorial outreach for the brand.

MSLGroup, San Francisco/Ancestry.com, publicly traded genealogy resource, as consumer and social media agency in the U.S., following an RFP process.

Social Muse Communications, Sherman Oaks, Calif./RESAAS Services, developer of a social network for the real estate industry, for media relations, blogger and online influencer relations, and social media.

Mayo Communications, Los Angeles/Sun Born Natural Products Co., for national PR.

DIÁLOGO, San Diego/Infusion Solutions, intravenous medical service, for PR following an agency review.

J PR, San Diego/TailGate Beer, craft brewer based in San Diego; Rockography, New York eatery; Burlap, San Diego restaurant; The Malibu Inn, L.A. landmark under new ownership, and Holsteins Shakes & Buns, based in Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas hotel, all for PR.

— Greg Hazley

NEWS OF SERVICES**IBM UNVEILS ANALYTICS SOFTWARE**

IBM on May 3 unveiled digital marketing analytics software, Coremetrics Lifecycle, a cloud-based service Big Blue said is intended to help customers analyze the effectiveness of digital marketing tools like email, display advertising, search marketing and social media.

Rob Brosnan, senior director of marketing strategy for Seton Hall Univ., said in the IBM announcement that the service is an approach to “automating online marketing.” Info: www.coremetrics.com.

BW BOOSTS MONITORING

Business Wire has added more detailed analytics to its NewsTrak measurement service for monitoring releases.

Laura Sturaitis, executive VP, media services and product strategy, said the company has committed “substantial resources” to calculate return on marketing investments with press releases.

“These reporting upgrades help practitioners get a clearer picture of what’s working and what’s not so they can quickly adjust to achieve their goals,” she said.

PRN REWORKS SMALL BIZ TOOL

PR Newswire released a redesigned version of its small business news dissemination package, PR Toolkit.

Michael Crumley, manager, strategic channels, at PRN, noted the service has been out for nearly 10 years and was revamped to give a “more intuitive” user experience and easier access to the information.

Users continue to have free access to resources like SEO and press release writing.

BRIEFS: Knotice, an Akron, Ohio-based digital marketing software company, said it signed Telltale Games for its email marketing software, Concentri EmailPlus. ... **PRSA/North Carolina** will host its third annual InSpire Awards Dinner and Reception May 11 at the Brier Creek Country Club emceed by ABC11 TV’s Angela Hampton. Info: www.ncprsa.org. ... **BurrellesLuce** has aggregated transcripts from various PR industry social media chats and community events at this link. ... **Civolution** has renewed and extended client Beachbody’s use of the Teletrax TV monitoring service. The health and fitness company will monitor its direct response campaigns with the service to confirm airing and store clips. ... **Graffiti PR** said CraigsList founder Craig Newmark will speak at the 2nd annual San Francisco PR Summit Conference July 27, 2011 at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Info: www.prsummit.org. ... **PRSA/N.Y.** will host the 2011 Big Apple Awards on May 26 from 6-9 p.m. at The Hudson Theatre, Millenium Broadway, 145 West 44th St. Cost: \$225 per person. Sign up and info:

https://prsanyc.org/register_new.php?id=28.

... **PRSA/National Capital Chapter** will host “How to Create an Award-Winning Thoth Application and Showcase Your Success,” at 8 a.m. May 11 at Navy Memorial, 701 Pennsylvania Ave. Info:

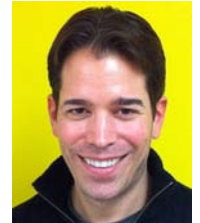
http://www.prsancc.org/option,com_events/task_view_detail/Itemid%20,194/aid,401/year,2011/month,05/.

PEOPLE**Joined**

Jennifer Thompson, managing director, truck maker Oshkosh Corp., to Edelman, Chicago, as senior VP, in its crisis and issues practice. She led global strategic growth and marketing for Oshkosh’s fire and emergency division and earlier headed government relations activities in the Asia Pacific sphere based in Beijing, developing its regional CSR efforts. She is a former Congressional aide to Reps. Robin Hayes (R-N.C.) John Thune (R-S.D). At Edelman, she handles strategy and mitigation solutions for global clients.

**Thompson**

James Currie, founder, Newport Creative Group, to Warschawski, Baltimore, as director of integrated marcom, encompassing social media, online and interactive, copy and editorial writing, PR, marketing and advertising.

**Currie**

JoAnne Laffey Heckman, who worked PR on the agency side and at HR consulting company AonHewitt, to VantagePoint, Greenville, S.C., as PR manager. Burgess Rodgers, marketing specialist, Entercom Upstate, joins as an A/E.

Jennifer Garnick, VP, publicity and talent relations, Buzzmedia, to the Independent Film & Television Alliance, Los Angeles, as VP, comms. She was previously a VP for The Lippin Group. Robin Burt was promoted to VP, marketing and membership for the IF&TA.

**Young**

Paige Young, director of marketing and corporate comms. for Egencia, Expedia’s corporate travel arm, to Publicis Consultants USA, Seattle, as a VP. PC is part of MSLGroup. She was also VP of corporate comms. for Weber Shandwick in Seattle, handling several Microsoft divisions and brands.

Angela Emery, VP and head of global comms. for Disney Interactive Studios, to video game publisher THQ, Agoura Hills, as VP of corporate communications, reporting to president/CEO Brian Farrell. She takes over for **Julie MacMedan**, VP, IR and corporate comms., who is leaving the company. Emery held earlier posts at Fox Interactive and Sega of America and managed PR for Microsoft Game Studios while at Edelman. THQ said it plans to hire a new IR pro.

Kevin Riggs, political reporter for KCRA-TV (NBC), to Randle Communications, Sacramento, as a senior VP. Riggs will handle strategic communications, media relations and business development initiatives and oversee media training for the firm, which counts clients like University of Phoenix, Kern County Water Agency, and California Association of REALTORS. RC also worked eBay CEO Meg Whitman’s gubernatorial bid last year.

**Riggs**

BRUNSWICK BACKS \$4.9B CONAGRA PITCH

ConAgra Foods has engaged Brunswick Group as the Omaha-based company pursues a \$4.9 billion acquisition of food producer Ralcorp Holdings, which has brushed off the offer.

ConAgra announced the unsolicited \$86-per-share proposal on May 4. That public statement came three days after Ralcorp was forced because of market activity to go public with a statement acknowledging that it had received an offer from a third party in March.

Ralcorp spokesman Matt Pudlowski said his company has hired Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher for PR.

Ralcorp markets Post brand cereals and various store-brand foods like chips, cookies and peanut butter.

The same day ConAgra went public on Wednesday, St. Louis-based Ralcorp said the deal was “not in the best interest of shareholders” and expressed a desire to remain independent.

ConAgra says the combine would build on its own \$850M private-label foods business creating an entity with \$4B in annual sales. Its latest offer is up from an initial \$82-per-share pitch in March, which was not previously disclosed.

“By combining our two businesses, we will create one of the top U.S. food companies, with product offerings across a wide range of price points, categories and channels,” said ConAgra CEO Gary Rodkin.

Brunswick senior partner Steve Lipin and director Gemma Hart in New York are supporting ConAgra’s media relations under the direction of Teresa Paulsen, VP/corporate comm.

MMC BAGS BEAN

Marina Maher Communications has hired Fleishman-Hillard’s Susan Bean, who led the consumer media, digital, social media, video and branded integration teams for key client AT&T.

Bean engineered key developments such as AT&T’s rebranding after the Cingular and BellSouth deals, launch of Apple’s iPhone and message development for the “Rock the Vote” campaign.

She positioned AT&T in the social media space, a project that bolstered the telecom’s Facebook page to the 1.5M fan mark.

Bean owns strong broadcast TV credentials earned via a more than 20-year stint as producer at CBS News, where she picked up credits for “The Early Show,” “CBS Evening News” and “Eye on America.”

Bean is to head MMC’s media connections practice. That practice handled programs like “Polamalooza” featuring NFL Pittsburgh Steelers great Troy Polamalu promoting Head & Shoulders shampoo to guys with thinning hair.



WPP SCORES WITH RONALDO

WPP has created 9ine, a sports marketing communications unit, with Ronaldo, one of professional soccer’s greatest players.

The 33-year-old Brazilian striker, who is hanging up his boots at yearend, led his country to World Cup victories in 1994 and 2002. His 15 goals in World Cup finals play is the record.

Ronaldo Luis Nazario de Lima (Ronaldo Fenomeno) also played for high-profile European clubs such as Barcelona, Real Madrid, AC Milan and Inter Milan.

Based in São Paulo, 9ine is to exploit opportunities worldwide and in the burgeoning Brazilian sports scene surrounding the 2014 FIFA World Cup, which is slated for a dozen Brazilian venues, and the 2016 Rio Olympic Games.

9ine serves a menu of PR, branded events, activation and related activities, according to WPP’s release.

WPP CEO Martin Sorrell believes this decade belongs to Brazil and Latin America. Noting that Ronaldo was voted FIFA’s best world footballer three times, Sorrell says “thankfully, he will playing for WPP.”

Ronaldo currently plays for the Corinthians in Brazil.



Ronaldo in a Nike ad campaign.

FWV SIGNS ANOTHER NFL STAR

French/West/Vaughan, which has counseled comeback NFL star Michael Vick, has signed the league’s top running back to generate endorsement deals and raise its profile outside of his home state.

Arian Foster, a surprise breakout star last year with the Houston Texans, will rely on Raleigh-based FWV for marketing and PR, the firm said.

Rick French said the agency was hired after he initially met Foster during Super Bowl Week in Dallas.

The athlete has an eye on more endorsement deals – Boombah footwear is a current backer – and a higher profile outside of Texas.

French said Foster has a “rags to riches story” that he thinks will resonate.

Foster was an undrafted free agent picked up by the Texans in 2009 who was cut and then added to the practice squad. After getting a start in last year’s first game, he eventually led the league in rushing (1,616 yards) and touchdowns (28).

VP Chris Shigas handles athlete PR for FWV, which has a Dallas office and also represents veteran NFL linebacker Simeon Rice.

Priority Sports & Entertainment handles football-related matters for Foster.



Foster



Bean

PR OPINION

Because of the revelations of the political activities of the Koch brothers by Jane Mayer in the *New Yorker* as well as other media, it is no longer appropriate for the former New York State Theater in Lincoln Center to be named after David H. Koch, his \$100 million gift to the theater notwithstanding.

David and Charles Koch, as further revealed in the May 9 issue of *The Nation*, are up to their ears in political activities, a fact that was not previously widely known.

The ballet and other performing arts at Lincoln Center should take place in an apolitical atmosphere.

We're not saying whether the Koch brothers are wrong or right in their beliefs – only that Lincoln Center should not serve as an advertisement for them.

Equally inappropriate would be such names as George Soros, Donald Trump or Rush Limbaugh.

The names are flashpoints in the heated debate on economic and political issues in a nation that is becoming increasingly polarized.

New York Is Heavily Democratic

A side issue is that New York is a Democratic party stronghold and many ballet patrons are being rubbed the wrong way when they see the Koch name where the New York City Ballet performs.

NYCB, facing a \$6 million deficit this year, just completed bitter labor negotiations with the dancers, who got no raise this year and only 2.5% raise in the year beginning in August. None of the Koch money went to the dancers.

The ballet often plays to a house that is half or two-thirds full. It spreads discount tickets at libraries throughout the metropolitan area to win attendance. It has a hard time attracting a younger audience whose musical tastes run to the songs that are on "American Idol." The dancers and staffers, meanwhile, are doing everything they can for "PR" including giving "tutorials" between programs and remaining after performances to answer questions.

We fault the Kochs for refusing to talk to Mayer while she was researching her article and for refusing to check the "facts" that she had sent to them.

No Mention of Sugar Taxes

Advertising Age May 2 bubbled with a six-page feature on Coca-Cola's 125th birthday, noting the company hopes to double sales in the next ten years but making no mention of its biggest threat – taxes on its high calorie products.

A soda tax lost in New York State last year but New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg is pushing for one as is California and at least 11 other states.

With two-thirds of the nation overweight and the costs burdening an already strained healthcare system, the move to cut sugar consumption has reached new levels of urgency. Teenagers are a "particularly important"

market for Coke, the Ad Age article says.

Sugar content in all beverages should be expressed in the form of teaspoons of sugar as well as calories and grams.

A poll on odwyerpr.com has found a 73-27% majority in favor of such a graphic on the front of containers.

This will do more to cut down on sugar consumption quickly than state and federal laws.

"Would you put ten teaspoons of sugar in your cup of coffee?" asks one of the health websites (which there are in a can of Pepsi – 150 calories or 15 calories per teaspoon). Coke has 9.33 teaspoons (140 calories). Coke's biggest failure, the so-called "New Coke" of 1985, was an attempt to "out-sweeten" Pepsi which had ten more calories of sugar, by upping the sugar in Coke to 156 calories.

It was "too sweet" and bombed in the market in 77 days.

Newspaper Ads Cut in Half

Financial writer John Sullivan has done an excellent job in analyzing the pressures on PR and journalism for ProPublica.

He points out the decline in journalism jobs and the expansion in PR jobs which now outnumber the former by about five-to-one. Also noted is the current emphasis on getting messages directly to consumers via social media, avoiding any intermediary function by the press. Companies are also creating their own "media." Sullivan noted newspaper ad revenue has fallen from a high of \$49B in 2000 to \$22B in 2009, a more than 50% drop. Especially hard hit was classified—down 92% in ten years.

TV advertising, meanwhile, grew from \$52B in 2000 to \$65B in 2010. Internet ads grew from \$7B in 2000 to \$35B in 2010. Magazine ads grew 1.1% yearly from 2000-2008 and were down 5.4% between 2008 and 2009. They were \$20B in 2010.

Ad agencies prefer TV ads because of their sound, motion and interruptive nature.

Another reason might be that newspapers provide plenty of space for differing opinions in letters-to-the-editor columns and op-ed space. Quotes from TV viewers are rare and very brief when they do appear.

Ad agencies are obviously no great fans of daily newspapers. Six major newspaper companies have gone into bankruptcy in recent years but no TV stations or networks that we know of.

The ad conglomerates have centralized media buying into a few powerful combines that decide which types of media will survive, which ones will be put on a starvation diet, and which ones will disappear.

The cardinal aim of ads is control of the message.

Social media is a new challenge for the advertising/marketing mindset because dialogue with consumers is involved.

— Jack O'Dwyer



David Koch and his wife, Julia, outside of the Koch Theater in New York.