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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
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PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES RECRUIT FOR PR PUSH

Four large public universities are calling for PR proposals to develop a national campaign to burnish so-called public flagship universities in the US.

The schools include the Univ. of Texas at Austin, Univ. of Kansas, Univ. of Pittsburgh and Univ. of Michigan. The Univ. of Texas issued an RFP on April 2 on behalf of the group for an agency to conduct research, develop goals and a PR strategy, and present a creative, integrated PR plan with three concepts.



The search comes out of a meeting of 10 provosts of public flagship universities in 2013, who agreed to expand an existing working group focused on comms. and public affairs. The four institutions above volunteered to investigate the feasibility of a unified campaign.

Proposals are due May 7. RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1F5WIIA>.

NATIONAL PEANUT BOARD CRACKS OPEN RFP

The National Peanut Board is gearing up for a review of its advertising, marketing and PR campaigns this summer in Atlanta.

The farmer-funded research/promotion operation is looking for "out of the box thinkers" to participate in the review process. "We consider the agencies review process a critical part of helping us deliver the most effective programs for the farmers who fund the National Peanut Board," said Bob Parker, NPB CEO.

The board is working with William Watson of The Fresh Approach to handle proposals. Selections are slated for mid-July with the new campaign launching in November. Watson is at wwatson@thefreshapproach.info and 407/415-5752.

GILLESPIE RETURNS TO BRUNSWICK

Ed Gillespie, who ran an unsuccessful race for Virginia's Senate seat last year, has returned to Brunswick Group as senior counselor. He'll focus on corporate reputation, PA, crisis management, data security and digital.

Based in Washington, the former Republican Party chairman and George W. Bush advisor will maintain his Ed Gillespie Strategies consultancy in Alexandria.

Gillespie also helped launch PA shops Quinn Gillespie & Associates (now QGA) and Policy Impact Communications.

David Sutphen heads Brunswick's DC outpost.

TARDIO RELINQUISHES REINS OF R&C

Rogers & Cowan CEO Tom Tardio is stepping down after 27 years at the helm of the entertainment PR powerhouse and is slated to join enterprise social software developer Socialtext as chairman in July.

The 63-year-old exec will take a chairman emeritus role with R&C as he advises the search for a successor. He took the CEO reins at R&C in 1991 from Richard Taylor and led the firm through its acquisition by Interpublic in 1998 (Shandwick bought R&C in 1987).

Waltham, Mass.-based Socialtext has operations in Silicon Valley and is backed by private equity firm Bedford Funding. Tardio is already a board member of recruiting software company PeopleFluent, also owned by Bedford. Paul Bloch is co-chair of R&C.



Tardio

NST, GABLE MERGE IN SAN DIEGO

Forty-year-old San Diego firms Nuffer, Smith, Tucker PR and Gable PR have merged under the Nuffer, Smith, Tucker name to form a mid-sized shop with 26 staffers and billings north of \$3.5M.

The firms started talks about a year ago amid plans to team up to pursue large contracts. Forty-one-year-old NST has strong consumer PR roots with clients like WD-40 Company and Chicken of the Sea, while Gable, set up in 1976, specializes in crisis and reputation management across several sectors with business from AT&T, Fisher & Phillips and the San Diego Zoo.

Gable founder Tom Gable, an author and former journalist, praised NST's consumer experience and capabilities in digital and public affairs as complementary to his firm's strengths. He will lead the combined firm with NST chief Bill Trumpfheller.

Trumpfheller, who started at NST in 1986 as an intern, said changing client needs and opportunities in new markets led to the combination. "It all added up" he said.

The firms consolidated in NST's offices on April 1.

WEIGHT WATCHERS TRIMS AD, PR ROSTER

Struggling Weight Watchers has trimmed its agency roster of Weiden + Kennedy (advertising) and Ketchum (PR).

McCann-Erickson held the account for several years before the switch to W+K last year.

WW released dour financial results for the quarter ended Jan. 3, sending its share price into a tailspin as membership dues and active subscribers dropped 10% and 15%, respectively. North American president Lesya Lysyj has also exited a year after joining from Heinekein.

CLUB MED BOOKS CURRENT FOR PR

Current Lifestyle Marketing has picked up Club Med's PR account after an RFP review.

The iconic all-inclusive resort company claims 65 properties around the world. Tallahassee-based The Zimmerman Agency previously handled the work.



Current, part of Interpublic, will base the account in New York under senior VP Sara Joseph, who heads its travel practice.

Club Med's North American VP of marketing and digital Sabrina Cendral praised Current's pitch from "the RFP to in-person meetings."

France-based Club Med was acquired by China's Fosun International in February after a global bidding war.

Current president Virginia Devlin said the firm is honored to be working with the client as it "evolves" its brand and resorts. She added: "We'll be working to distinguish unique offerings from the growing competition in this category and enticing discerning travelers to discover today's Club Med."

NV COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN WANTS PR

Nevada's college savings program is looking to enroll a PR firm to create a unified brand for its four offerings.

The state's 529 programs, including the Nevada Prepaid Tuition Program, College Kick Start Program, College Savings Plans of Nevada and Gov. Guinn Millennium Scholarship. The Silver State wants a firm to create an overall "umbrella" brand for the suite of programs through PR and promotions, social media and digital, and media placement. Firms can pitch all or individual segments of the work.

The Nevada State Treasurer's Office released an RFP on March 30.

Proposals are due May 8. RFP:
<http://odwpr.us/1CbzzXE>.

EDELMAN EXITS RUSSIA

Edelman is closing its Russia operation and transferring the business to an affiliate relationship with local shop PRT.

Michael Stewart, who heads Edelman's Europe & CIS unit, said "increasingly difficult" business conditions in Russia spurred the retrenchment move.

Kerry Irwin, head of Edelman's Russian unit, is expected to shift to another post within the independent firm. Edelman has about 15 staffers in Russia, handling accounts such as Unilever, Bayer and Diageo.

Stewart is former director of global communications at McKinsey & Co. Despite sanctions imposed by the west on Russia for its annexation of Crimea, he said PR demand in the country remains strong.

SLOANE AIDS MGM PROXY CHALLENGE

Activist investor Land and Buildings has engaged proxy and PR support as it pushes a slate of four director nominees for the MGM Resorts International board and a split of the company.

New York-based Sloane & Company is providing financial PR counsel to L&B, a Stamford, Conn.-based hedge fund focused on the real estate sector. L&B wants MGM, the top Las Vegas casino operator, to split into a real estate investment trust and spin off a hotel/lodging company. L&B, arguing that MGM is undervalued and its board missing opportunities, is using Innisfree M&A for proxy solicitation.

Clark Dumont heads corporate comms. for MGM Resorts, while Sarah Rogers is VP of IR. MGM told Bloomberg earlier this month that it agrees the company is undervalued, adding it would review the L&B slate, although its preliminary proxy unveiled three days later did not include any L&B nominees. MGM in an SEC filing said its board "strongly urges" investors not to sign or turn the L&B proxy card.

Sloane & Co. CEO Elliot Sloane and managing director Dan Zacchei advise L&B.

L&B on April 1 released a public letter to MGM's lead independent director to form a special committee and engage an independent financial advisor.

PR FIRMS NEED TO WORK ON MOBILE

Only 55 of 96 websites belonging to the PR firms in O'Dwyer's 2015 rankings meet Google's mobile-friendly criteria, according to a study by Didit Communications.

Each website address was entered into Google's test page. Of the 45 firms in the New York ranking, 42% had websites that are mobile-friendly.

The most common errors are:

- Text set at a point size too small to read on mobile
- Links spaced too closely together to be clicked
- Mobile viewports not set correctly
- Use of incompatible plug-ins
- Content set wider than screen making it invisible
- Blocking access to resources used by Google bots

'Mobilegeddon' is coming

In late February Google announced effective April 21 websites that fail to provide a good mobile browsing experience will suffer from reduced search visibility on those devices.

This doesn't mean though that the failing websites will not appear.

"Because agencies have less than a month to pass the test, it's incumbent upon agency management to take this issue seriously," Didit's Editor-in-Chief Stephen Baldwin stresses.

Baldwin points out that according to Emarketer.com, "2015 will see mobile search reach the tipping point -- the stage at which the majority of spend, organic traffic, and paid clicks comes from smartphones and tablets."

Baldwin acknowledges that while the deadline is fast approaching, problems causing a "fail" can be solved easily in most cases and Google's own Webmaster Tools provides helpful resources to identify and eliminate mobile-friendly issues.

CABLEVISION BIDS BUCK FOR DAILY NEWS

Cablevision Systems Corp. CEO Jim Dolan plans to bid \$1 for the *New York Daily News*, according to Reuters.

The Long Island-based cable TV company owns *Newsday* and once launched its own splashy drive into the Big Apple market, which failed.

News owner & real estate mogul Mort Zuckerman put the loss-plagued tabloid on the market last month. The News lost an estimated \$30M last year and is in need for cash for a printing press.

Like the rest of the business, the News has suffered a sharp decline in circulation.

Cablevision's *Newsday* and News 12 Network operation posted flat revenues of \$361M during 2014. The group's operating loss declined 31.6 percent to \$211M.

NYT NAMES WILSON DIGITAL GURU

Kinsey Wilson, who joined the *New York Times* as strategy & innovation editor from NPR in February, has been named executive VP/product & technology.

He's responsible for the digital transformation of the paper.

Originally, the Times was going to partner Wilson's newsroom slot with a technology partner, according to Dean Baquet, executive editor.

The plan changed as Wilson moved quickly to "grasp the challenges and opportunities" connected with the revamp.

Baquet hailed Wilson as a "digital visionary with deep roots in journalism" and his "keen understanding of digital products and technology."

At NPR, Wilson was chief content officer in charge of news-gathering, programming and digital operations.

Earlier, he was executive editor of *USA Today*, developer of Congressional Quarterly's web strategy and reporter for *Newsday*.

Wilson reports to Baquet and CEO Mark Thompson.

The Times also upped David Perpich to senior VP-product, reporting to Wilson.

Perpich joined the NYT in 2010 from Booz & Co. consulting shop.

CHARTER ACQUIRES BRIGHT HOUSE

Charter Communications is buying a majority stake in Bright House Networks, the country's No. 6 cable TV operator, from Advance/Newhouse Partnership for \$10.4B.

Bright House, which is based in Syracuse, services 2M customers in central Florida (Tampa, Orlando), Alabama, Indiana, Michigan and California.

Tom Rutledge, CEO of Stamford-based Charter, said Bright House "has built outstanding cable systems in attractive markets that are either complete, or contiguous



Wilson

with the new Charter footprint."

The deal enhances Charter's scale and solidifies the company as the No. 2 cable operator, he added.

Steve Miron, CEO of Bright House, has known Rutledge for more than 20 years.

Rutledge once managed cable systems that were part of a partnership with Time Warner Cable before the creation of Bright House Networks.

Charter will own 73.7 percent of the merged company with Advance/Newhouse in control of the remainder shares.

TIME OUT NEW YORK GOES FREE

Time Out New York will drop its paid newsstand sales and move to a free weekly distribution model this spring.

The nightlife and entertainment magazine said it will more than double its print run to 305,000, following sister publication Time Out London's similar move in 2012.

Time Out Group CEO Tim Arthur said the change is expected to grow the TO brand. "In making the magazine a free opportunity, we anticipate the brand recognition will significantly increase amongst our target audience in New York and place us in a strong position for growth in New York, as well as elsewhere in the U.S.," he said.

TONY will be distributed on Wednesdays at commuter hubs and other points around New York, in addition to Barnes and Noble stores and at Madison Square Garden. Current subscribers will be asked to cover a "nominal" charge for postage.



MEREDITH EYES LATINA MILLENNIAL PARENTS

Meredith has launched *Parents Latina*, an English-language magazine targeting US Hispanic millennial moms.

Rate base is 700K.

The magazine includes content from *Parents* and *Ser Padres* with topics like kid's health and nutrition, women's healthy and beauty, home and lifestyle, cooking and finance.

Grace Bastidas (*Latina*, *New York Magazine Weddings*) is editor.



NEWSWEEK LAUNCHES ASIA EDITION

Newsweek, which was bought by IBT Media last year, is launching an English-language Asia edition this month.

The first book, its April 24th edition, is slated for sale on April 17th and will include content from the American edition with a focus on the region, including China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

It is the third major market for Newsweek under IBT, alongside the Americas and Europe-Middle East-Africa.

CONTENT, OUTREACH MARKETING EMERGE

By Mike Crawford

Content and outreach marketing are two buzzwords that have recently cropped up in the communications industry. Similar to PR, they create and maintain relationships with an organization's key publics. Although different from each other, they have the same end goal of telling a brand's story.

Content Marketing tells a brand's story by getting its owned media or originally created material in front of a targeted audience. The content must be valuable and relevant to the audience. Content marketing can come in many shapes and sizes: microsites, blogs, e-books, infographics, contributed articles, etc.

Additionally, this form of marketing doubles as a search engine optimization strategy.

The first goal of content marketing is to make the user say, "Wow! I want to share this with my friends." Then their friends want to share it with more friends, and the cycle continues. In the end, you want some of those friends to recommend you, make a purchase from you, etc.

One off-beat example of solid content marketing is from an Australian company, Metro Trains, which ran a campaign on rail safety. Its agency, McCann Melbourne, decided to take a non-boring route to this safety message with the song, "Dumb Ways to Die." The video was viewed more than 83 million times on YouTube and was later released on iTunes. This effect was a decrease in train accidents and deaths by 21 percent because the brand provided valuable and relevant content on a medium that the target audience used.

Outreach Marketing is similar to media relations, but instead of targeting traditional media reporters, brands target bloggers and key social media influencers who are already advocates of theirs or their industry.

A brand's contact will reach out to these advocates and find more ways to incorporate the brand into the advocate's everyday life. The important thing to remember is that these advocates are not just people who can talk about the brand; they are an extension of the brand. Relationships with these advocates last far beyond one marketing campaign and build word of mouth both online and off.

For example, recently M/C/C reached out to mom bloggers on behalf of its client Animalz by ReTrak. The agency was trying to gain as much recognition for the unknown brand during the busiest buying season of the year - the holidays. The bloggers were all advocates of kids' technology or stocking stuffers.

After providing these bloggers with information, a BuzzFeed quiz and a product video, nearly 80 posts were written and engaged customers through almost 7,000 tracked social actions. In just three months, the agency helped drive more than 50 percent of Animalz sales in 2014, with a year-over-year increase of 1,755 percent.

Instead of just telling targeted audiences what they need to know about a brand, these tactics allow brands to participate in two-way dialogue. If a brand is OK with letting go of some of the message control, then these tactics may be just the right fit.

Mike Crawford is the president of Dallas-based integrated marketing communications firm M/C/C.

IS MISINFORMATION FEEDING OBESITY?

By Louise Pollock

Consumers are becoming more aware of the serious weight problem in the United States, but several factors are hindering improvement according to the 2015 "What's Trending in Nutrition" survey conducted by Pollock Communications, and the nutrition trade magazine, *Today's Dietitian*. Here's what food manufacturers need to know.

Obesity awareness is rising in the U.S. Healthcare professionals, lawmakers and the media openly and frequently discuss the issue of obesity and what can be done to curb its growing rates in the U.S., along with the myriad health ailments that it causes, including heart disease and diabetes.

Below are several factors that could be fueling the weight problem in America:

A proliferation of misinformation

Blogs dish about nutrition, but can't always be trusted. Nearly 40% also agree that consumers receive the most misinformation from blogs and websites, and they predict that there will be more nutrition misinformation available in 2015.

Adoption of fads over healthy lifestyles

Gluten-free diets dominate the weight loss fads of the moment, but eliminating gluten will not eliminate obesity. According to the experts, 66% believe gluten-free or wheat-free diets will continue to be trendy in 2015.

But 51% of nutrition experts say that choosing high-quality, nutrient-rich foods in all food groups, is the best diet advice to follow. It boils down to making the right food and lifestyle choices, rather than following the diet fads.

Confusion over the right choices

While low-carb diets remain strong, low-fat diets are fading. For another consecutive year, the overwhelming majority of dietitians predict that the low-fat diet will fall flat in 2015, with only 4% naming it as a popular eating trend among consumers. As consumers welcome fat back into their eating plans, the question becomes: which fats are best? In the battle of the fats, 84% of nutrition experts agree that consumers should replace saturated fat with good fats (mono- and polyunsaturated fatty acids).

Unrealistic, unhealthy comparisons

How do consumers gauge their health and weight? By comparing themselves to friends and family, say 35% of dietitians, while 30% say that consumers use people in magazines or on television as their basis for health and weight comparisons. Obviously, this sets the consumer up for failure.

Disconnect between wants and needs

According to the experts, consumers are looking for more eco-labels in 2015, with 69% of experts saying that GMO-free labels are most important to their clients. However, while there will be new food and nutrition trends — or "consumer wants" — in 2015, the survey revealed that shoppers' choices are ultimately dictated by three basic needs — convenience, taste and price. There are some things shoppers just won't sacrifice, regardless of what's trendy.

Louise M. Pollock is President of Pollock Communications.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**PEOPLE'S BOEHM LEADS DKC DIGITAL UNIT**

Kristin Boehm, deputy editor of People.com, has shifted to DKC to direct the New York-based firm's DKC Connect digital unit.

Boehm was director of news and engagement for People's digital arm before overseeing its daily digital operations. She launched the magazine's mobile site, app and partnership with the celebrity image disseminator WhoSay.

Mercury alum Wendy Leggitt stepped down from the DKC Connect role in January after more than three years.

DKC Sean Cassidy noted Boehm's experience leading daily digital "for one of the most prestigious entertainment news brands" was among several factors that made her the right fit to lead the independent firm's digital practice.

Boehm started out in journalism with the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* before moving to the *New York Post*, where she became an online editor.

DKC is coming off a strong 2014, up more than 26% to \$41.5M.

**Boehm****FTI VETS OPEN CLAREMONT PARTNERS**

Four former managing directors of FTI Consulting have set up Claremont Partners to guide financial communications and issues management out of New York and Chicago.

Hugh Barker, cross-border M&A leader at FTI, Chris Kettman, who led capital markets for FTI's energy & natural resources unit, and Victoria Sivrais, deputy head of FTI's capital markets practice, are founding partners. Barbara Ryan, who led FTI's healthcare & life sciences capital markets practice, is also a partner.

The firm will tackle assignments like shareholder activism, public capital raises, M&A counsel, crisis training and IR, among other issues.

The partners are also blogging at <http://clermont-partners.com/clermonts-view/>.

O'REILLY COMPUTES FOR EDELMAN

Edelman has hired Martin O'Reilly, who was chief information officer at Burson-Marsteller, as its global CIO and technology officer.

He looks forward to enhancing the "operational delivery" of the No. 1 independent firm's tech systems and using them to benefit clients.

At B-M, O'Reilly developed martech platforms, analytics and strategic technology partnerships.

Prior to B-M, he was CEO of WPP Group Technology Services, where he consolidated technical infrastructure structures.

At Edelman, O'Reilly reports to Matt Harrington, Edelman's global COO.

**O'Reilly****NEW ACCOUNTS****West**

McGrath/Power, San Jose/DayMen, the parent company of Lowepro, JOBY and Acme Made Brands photography and video equipment, for communications programs for each brand, with a focus on individual brand awareness and consumer engagement; **Abode Systems**, startup providing DIY home security and automation solutions, for a comms. program with a focus on early adopters and technology enthusiasts, and **Clearswift**, UK-based IT security company, for its US marketing introduction and to manage overall comms. efforts over multiple channels, including traditional media and analyst relations, social media engagement and sales support activities.

Zapwater Communications, Los Angeles/Hollywood & Highland, as AOR for PR, including media and influencer relations, and digital content and partnerships for the destination and lifestyle center. H&H features the Dolby Theatre, home of the Academy Awards, as well as more than 70 retailers and 25 restaurants.

Havas Formula, San Diego/Monoprice, consumer electronics and tech gear e-tailer, for a national RP program, including a product review initiative, blogger engagements, thought leadership, and award submissions, as well as national media relations.

Midwest

MMGY Global, Kansas City, Mo./Leading Hotels of the World, for integrated marketing and PR; **Occidental Hotels & Resorts**, for brand strategy for its resorts in Mexico and the Caribbean, and **NH Hotel Group**, as US AOR for PR for the business hotel chain with 400 properties.

Bianchi PR, Troy, Mich./Eisele Connectors, for North American PR as the unit of Germany's Eisele Pneumatics enters the market with its leak-proof connectors for the auto, food processing, pharmaceutical, packaging and other sectors.

New York Area

PCG Advisory Group, New York/Novogen, drug development, for IR in the US via a targeted outreach campaign.

Magrino, New York/Chateau d'Esclans estate and winery (Provence, France), and **Le District**, curated market and eatery that opened in downtown Manhattan last week, for PR. The firm also renewed James Beard Foundation Awards and the Kips Bay Decorator Show House.

Praytell Strategy, Brooklyn/ Kobalt, database and rights software for the music industry; **SoundCloud**, audio distribution platform; **Gametime** and **Snag-Films**.

Southeast

JTo PR, Clearwater, Fla./Sterling, business management training for the medical arts and finance sectors, for PR.

International

Ogilvy PR, Jakarta, Indonesia/World Economic Forum, for PR for its upcoming East Asia forum in Jakarta April 19-21. The firm is promoting the meeting's theme of "Anchoring Trust in East Asia's New Regionalism."

NEWS OF SERVICES**BROADCAST PR EXEC JIM HILL DIES AT 64**

Jim Hill Jr., VP and co-owner of broadcast PR provider News Broadcast Network, died March 27 after a long battle with cancer. He was 64.

Hill was a veteran national radio reporter covering sports like golf, bowling, tennis and auto racing for more than a decade for CBS and the former Mutual Broadcasting System (now Westwood One). The Wisconsin resident also covered the Milwaukee Brewers and Bucks in the 1970s and 1980s before moving into PR with New York-based NBN, which is led by Jim's brother, Michael.

At NBN, Hill produced client projects and handled voice-overs for PSAs.

Hill is survived by his wife, Sherri Shell, five step-children and four step-grandchildren, along with brothers Michael, Bob and Tom.

FORMER WIECK PRESIDENT DIES AT 86

Margaret Ann Boatright, former president of Dallas-based photo and content distribution company Wieck, died March 25. She was 86.

Boatright was a longtime executive with United Press International, where she started in 1961. She was president of Wieck from 2001-03 and was an operation founder of the company, which distributes photos for the New York Times Syndicate and News Service.

Wieck chairman James Wieck credits Boatright with the company's success. "Marge put us in business," he said. "She went to New York and landed that first contract and we had immediate legitimacy."

She is survived by a sister, Elsie Burt O'Neal, daughter Bethann Freeland and husband Mark, of McAllen, TX, and a son, Jay Boatright of Horseshoe Bay, TX, five grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

MULTIVU OVERHAULS PSA SERVICES

PR Newswire has restructured its MultiVu unit's PSA services and created a digital distribution platform for such content.

The new portal, psaroom.com, allows PSA directors to download broadcast quality, HD content, preview videos, and receive collateral materials.

The overhaul includes the design of new distribution packages for digital and hard copy dissemination that gives each PSA its own landing page.

TVEYES UPS MILES

Fairfield, Conn.-based media monitoring provider TVEyes has promoted Dan Miles to COO, a new post.

He had recently been SVP of new business and joined from Cablevision, where he handled marketing and advertising, as well as its rollout of Optimum WiFi.

TVEyes CEO David Ives praised Miles' combination of analytical and people skills as a means to grow the company in the US and internationally. Miles will oversee new product roll-outs and the company's infrastructure build-out, as well.

**Miles****PEOPLE****Joined**

David Irwin, senior manager, comms., AARP, to Delta Dental Plans Association, Oak Brook, Ill., as director of corporate communications, handling national media relations, social media efforts, message strategy, reputation management, and crisis comms. Prior to 12 years at AARP, he held PA posts at Nextel Partners and the Washington State Senate.

Dan Colegrove, former vice president of government affairs for DineEquity, to Goddard Gunster, Washington, D.C., as a senior advisor. He continues as president/CEO of his own shop, ACME Public Affairs.

Will Dempster, a key aide to 2014 defeated Democratic Senator Mary Landreau, to McBee Strategic Consulting, Washington, D.C., as VP in its communications practice. Prior to Capitol Hill, he worked for Qorvis Communications in its geopolitical solutions unit.

Sarah Catz, vice chancellor, Brandman University, to Vectis Strategies, Los Angeles, as senior partner to open an Irvine office. The veteran attorney and PA counselor was acting deputy secretary of transportation as well as project manager for The Commission on Building for the 21st Century, a California infrastructure commission.

Lauren Vocelle to senior account manager, communications 21, Atlanta. In addition to client work, Vocelle, who joined in 2013, manages the firm's internship program.

Alexis Kagarakis to A/C, Perry Communications Group, Sacramento. The former PCG intern specializes in event planning and third party outreach.

**Kagarakis****Promoted**

Sara Gourlay to head of Hill+Knowlton Strategies' global technology practice. She previously led its Asia-Pacific tech operation and joined the firm in 2000 from Dell, where she held several European posts. **Amanda Groty**, who held the global tech post, moves to PayPal as senior director, communications, EMEA.

**Gourlay**

Tyler Durham to president of Ketchum Change, the firm's change management specialty group. The Ketchum partner takes over for **David Rockland**, who will focus on his role as managing director of Ketchum Global Research & Analytics.

Christine Bridger to executive creative director, Current Lifestyle Marketing, New York. She leads the firm's digital expansion. Also, **Jonathan Kreissman**, VP for Robin Leedy & Assocs., has joined CLM as a VP.

Jonathan Zaback to president of marketing holding company The CHR Group's new communications and brand marketing division, which houses PR firms, social media and similar operations. They include Raker Goldstein, Trylon SMR, Studio One and Adler, among others. Zaback continues as chief strategy officer and partner at CHR.

NEWLINK BRINGS JUAN VALDEZ BACK

Newlink America is bringing back Juan Valdez, the iconic logo/character of Colombian coffee, to the US to guide the opening of units of the Juan Valdez Café.

Two Miami stores opened last year to pave the way for 60 more cafes in the Sunshine State over the next five years.

Newlink's PR mission is to "make Juan Valdez Café top of mind across the US," according to Alejandra Londoño, VP-international business for the coffee store company.

More than 300 cafes exist in 14 countries including South Korea, Spain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, Ecuador and Peru.

Looking for a gulp of the \$18B US coffee market, Newlink plans to target the "discerning coffee consumer."

Jorge Ortega, Newlink co-founder and Jeffrey Group/Burson-Marsteller alum, says his firm knows what sets the client's brand apart.

He looks forward to bringing the Juan Valdez brand "to the forefront of the conversation in the US."

The Valdez character was created in 1959.

A Newlink staffer told O'Dwyer's that Valdez's trusty sidekick, Conchita, won't be making appearances here "due to international travel difficulties for mules."

While Conchita remains at her farm home in Colombia, "her twin American sister" may show up at US openings," added the Newlink rep.



The Juan Valdez character dates back to the 1950s.

AMAZON HIRES LOBBYIST FOR DRONE UNIT

Sean Cassidy, who was top lobbyist at the Air Line Pilots Assn. has moved to Amazon to handle its emerging package delivery by drone service.

The former Alaska Air pilot will help develop partnerships for the Amazon Prime Air unit.

Amazon has been tussling with the Federal Aviation Administration over the outdoor testing of drones beyond their line of sight.

The world's No. 1 retailer wanted to flight test drones close to its Seattle headquarters, but was thwarted by the FAA.

The Guardian reports that Amazon is testing drones at a Canadian site located about 2,000 ft. from the US border.

Gur Kimchi, head of Prime Air, told the *Guardian* that the company has been limited in the US to flying indoors for a very long time and now uses Canada for outdoor flying.

Amazon also has research facilities in the UK and Israel.

The FAA claims it is working with Amazon on the drone testing situation.



Cassidy

DE BLASIO'S IMAGE MAVEN EXITS

Rebecca Kirsznner Katz is exiting her role as special advisor to New York Mayor Bill deBlasio for a partner slot at Hilltop Public Solutions.

The *New York Times* called Katz "the primary protector of the de Blasio family's public image."

Joining de Blasio's team in 2009 when he ran for public advocate, Katz is considered "the fifth member of our immediate family," according to the Mayor.

She handled media relations and cultivated deBlasio's cultural profile by arranging for celebrities such as Chris Rock and Louis C.K. to appear at public events at City Hall, according to the *Times*.

Katz also ironed out appearances for de Blasio on "The Daily Show" and "The Colbert Report."

She says she will continue to offer advice to de Blasio.

SEIDMAN MOVES TO GLOVER PARK

Rob Seidman, a top Republican politico, has joined Democratic-heavy Glover Park Group, as VP in its government affairs practice.

Most recently, he worked for New Hampshire Senator Kelly Ayotte on Commerce Committee issues such as technology, privacy, telecommunications, cybersecurity, trade, and intellectual property.

Earlier, he was policy director for Tennessee Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn and her work on the Energy & Commerce Committee.

During the George W. Bush presidency, Seidman handled intergovernmental affairs at the Commerce Dept.

Seidman spent seven years as assistant to the president at the National Rifle Assn. and was national coalitions director for the McCain for President bid.

WPP owns Glover Park Group, the Washington-based public affairs shop.



Seidman

LENNOX HEADS IR, COMMS FOR AMAG

Linda Lennox, who directed IR and corporate communications at Lantheus Medical Imaging, has moved to Massachusetts-based drug company AMAG Pharmaceuticals as VP of IR and corporate comms.

Lennox takes a role held by Kathryn Payne, an APCO Worldwide alum who was upped to VP of external affairs to oversee PR, policy and advocacy at the state and national level.

AMAG, which went public in 2011, this month raised \$201M in a public offering. Revenues for 2014 were \$124.4M.

Lennox previously led investor and media relations at Critical Therapeutics and held IR and comms. roles at NUI Corp. and Providence Entergy Corp.

BRIEF: Ryan Kuresman, VP and director in APCO Worldwide's corporate communications and issues management unit, has moved to Porter Novelli in Washington as a senior VP to lead the firm's PA and corporate comms. practice.

The shift of 2015 PRSA chair Kathy Barbour from Baptist Health South Florida to a marketing firm and the continued battle in the Hamptons over a Jewish religious boundary called an eruv involve religion, law, PR and the media.

How these forces interact with each other, including which ones come out on top, is a topic that deserves exploration.

Since we're getting no explanations from any executives of PR people on Barbour's shift, we're making our own conjectures.

Her previous employer for two and a half years was Baptist Health South Florida, a chain of six hospitals and other facilities that describes itself as the largest non-profit, healthcare organization in the region.

Baptist Health South Florida Is "Faith-Based"

BH South Florida says it is "a faith-based organization guided by the spirit of Jesus Christ and the Judeo-Christian ethic." It is committed to "utmost integrity and moral practice." It also talks about its "spiritual foundation."

So when Barbour became chair-elect of the PR Society last year, we contacted hospital officials and board members and pointed out the Society's boycott against the O'Dwyer Co., after selling its articles without permission for 18 years and then conducting a campaign aimed at discrediting it, was inconsistent with the ethical values of BHSF as featured on its website.

The Society's actions don't square with its own ethical Code, either. The Code mentions "ethics" or "ethical" 13 times and says ethical behavior is the most important duty of a member.

Since efforts to remind the Society of its ethical promises go nowhere, the next move is to bring this to the attention of employers of the leaders of the Society.

Legal action is prevented because of the cost and years such a route requires. Another current example is the dispute in Southampton, Westhampton Beach and Quogue over a proposed Orthodox religious boundary called an eruv.

Hamptons Eruv Fight in Fifth Year

That battle is now in its fifth year and shows every sign of continuing many years into the future.

BH South Florida officials and directors ignored our emails and letters but we notice that Barbour was no longer with the hospital as of the beginning of 2015. She joined Acosta in Jacksonville, a marketing firm that helps hundreds of companies to win shelf space in thousands of supermarkets and groceries. Revenues are \$1.2 billion.

Barbour can now help Acosta tackle a negative image problem. Acosta appears to be in the business of dealing with retail outlets that "auction off" their shelf space to the highest bidder.

The winning bidder may not be the one offering the best products at the best prices to consumers. Consumer choice may be restricted. A headline in the Washington Post tells it succinctly: ANALYSIS / Grocery stores demanding pay for shelf space / Profit motive may over-

shadow customers' preferences

The article, written Margaret Webb Pressler for the *Washington Post* of Jan. 20, 2004, referenced an 80-page 2003 study of the Federal Trade Commission that found that nationwide introduction of a new grocery product would cost \$1.5 million to \$2 million in slotting fees.

Motley Fool on Aug. 26, 2013 headlined "The Hidden Profit Machine for Grocery Stores," saying such fees appear to be "the norm" for Kroger, Safeway and other chains. Allowing for inflation since 2003, the cost of a nationwide rollout would now be as high as \$2.5M, it said. Not charging such fees, it added, are Wal-Mart, Whole Foods, The Fresh Market and Fairway.

Slotting fees are not only charged for new products but for keeping products on the shelves, said Sheefood.com, which wrote about the "harsh reality" of slotting fees and called them "unconscionable levies" that the consumer often does not know about.

Wikipedia said some companies feel such fees are "unethical." Initial inventory of a product often are given free to get them on the shelves. All stories about slotting fees note that almost no one from the supplier or retail sides will talk about them. Such fees are said to be kept "off the books."

Barbour switched to merchandising after 16 years in healthcare. Relevant is that president and CEO of Acosta is Robert E. Hill Jr., who since 2010 has been chair of Baptist Health of North Florida, another sizable chain with 9,000 employees.

Karen Mathis, then managing editor of the *Financial News & Daily Record*, Bailey Publishing & Communications, published an 8,000-word interview with Hill on July 23, 2012 that did not mention slotting fees. Mathis is now PR manager of Acosta.

BH North Florida Lacks Values Statement

Unlike BHSF, which has an elaborate, religion-based statement of values, BH North Florida has no such statement at all, saying it prefers to let its patients describe their experiences with the hospital.

Why wouldn't Hill find a job for Barbour with BHNF since she has so much experience with hospitals and healthcare and none in the highly competitive world of fighting for and buying retail shelf space?

Melanie Husk, SVP, marketing and communications, BHNF, said in an email that Hill's role as chair of BHNF has nothing to do with what organizations his employees chose to join or lead.

We beg to differ. He wouldn't let Barbour lead the Klu Klux Klan or any other organization with dubious behavior. The PR Society's boycotting of the O'Dwyer Co. is a violation of press freedom, a bedrock value of America. The Society is supposed to be setting an example of good, not bad, press relations.

Abusive Society policies and practices are the reason it has hardly grown since 2000. It membership was 19,600 then vs. 22,000 currently which is minimal growth since PR jobs reached 208,030 as of May 2014, according to the U.S. Dept. of Labor.

— Jack O'Dwyer