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Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's

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## **TN TARGETS SMOKING DURING PREGNANCY**

The Tennessee Dept. of Health is looking for proposals for a statewide campaign to encourage pregnant women to stop smoking or vaping.



Smoking during pregnancy impacts the fetus immediately after the mother inhales any tobacco product, according to the RFP.

Research shows that tobacco product usage is the No. 1 preventable cause of pregnancy complications and death of infants.

Pregnant smokers are nearly twice as likely to have a low-birth-weight baby as non-smokers. They also deliver babies that are three times more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

The DoH envisions an effort that utilizes public health education and cessation counseling support during pregnancy and the postpartum period while incorporating the ability to measure behavioral change and offer tangible incentives for success.

It has budgeted \$1.2M for a three-year communications campaign.

Responses are due Sept. 14.

[Read the RFP.](#)

## **PEPSICO'S BANNER TO MCDONALD'S**

McDonald's names Jon Banner EVP and global chief impact officer, effective September 6.

Banner joins McDonald's after spending 10 years with PepsiCo, where he most recently served as EVP, communications and president of the PepsiCo Foundation. He also co-created PepsiCo Positive, an end-to-end transformation of how the company creates growth and shared value with sustainability and human capital at the center.



**Jon Banner**

He was previously at Disney/ABC, working as executive producer on programs including "World News Tonight" and "This Week."

In a memo sent to the McDonald's global System, CEO Chris Kempczinski said, "Jon is the perfect leader to oversee our Sustainability & ESG, Government Relations and Public Policy, Communications and International Corporate Relations functions, as

well as Ronald McDonald House Charities—building on the momentum of the Impact function as we strengthen and protect our reputation around the world."

## **WPP PUSHES UKRAINE'S ECONOMIC REBOUND**

WPP's Group M Worldwide is handling Ukraine's Ministry of Culture and Information Policy's "Advantage Ukraine" campaign to promote confidence among businesses, investors and policymakers that the battered country will recover from the Russian invasion.

The multi-market advertising, PR and promotional campaign will drive home the message that Ukraine "is still open for business and has the potential to be a key cultural and digital technology European hub."

Advantage Ukraine is part of a wider program launched by the Ministry that will "showcase the variety of talent and expertise in Ukraine across sectors including agricultural, technology, education and the creative industries."

Group M's Warsaw office coordinates the WPP effort that includes participation from Ogilvy GmbH (Frankfurt), Hogarth Worldwide (Bucharest), Mindshare Poland and Hill+Knowlton Strategies (New York).

The Group M effort runs through the rest of the year.



## **STRAUSS EXITS M BOOTH HEALTH**

Karen Strauss, chief marketing and growth officer at [M Booth Health](#), has exited the Next 15 Communications unit to launch her own firm.

Strauss joined M Booth Health in 2020 as chief strategy & innovation officer and co-led its Pharma Brandemic study that tracks attitudes and behaviors toward pharmaceutical brands.

Prior to M Booth Health, Strauss worked at Ketchum as EVP & executive creative director/healthcare; chief global strategy & creative officer; and chief innovation officer.

She calls Karen Strauss Communications LLC a firm that "believes well-chosen words have the power to distinguish individuals, brands and companies; catapult leaders to fame; and win business, recognition and followers."

Stacey Bernstein, who was executive VP & global director at [Weber Shandwick](#), succeeded Tim Bird as M Booth Health CEO in January. She reports to M Booth CEO Dale Bornstein.

M Booth Health [ranks No. 12 on O'Dwyer's roster of healthcare firms](#) with 2021 fee income of \$16.3M.



**Karen Strauss**

## QUAYLE REPS SAUDI ARABIA'S LIV GOLF

Hobart Hallaway & Quayle Ventures is representing Saudi Arabia's LIV Golf for "education and issues related to professional golf in the US and abroad," according to its federal filing.



Former Arizona Republican Congressman Ben Quayle, the son of former VP Dan Quayle, works the account with Rashid Hallaway, who was legislative aide to ex-Senator Birch Bayh (D-IN).

LIV Golf is also using Nashville-based HHQV to protect the rights of professional golfers to play when and where they want to.

The PGA Tour has suspended golfers who defected to LIV Golf. Eleven of those defectors, including Phil Mickelson and Bryson DeChambeau, filed an antitrust suit against the PGA on Aug. 3.

PGA's legal team, on Aug. 23, responded by asking the federal judge handling the antitrust suit to unseal details of the contracts signed by the golfers who joined the LIV.

LIV Golf describes its mission as "modernizing and supercharging the game of professional golf."

It also is part of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's effort to modernize Saudi Arabia.

## FGS GLOBAL STEERS STRUGGLING CINEWORLD

**FGS Global** handles Cineworld Group PLC as it confirms media speculation that the owner of Regal Cinemas in the US is mulling Chapter 11 bankruptcy among its "strategic options" to deal with slumping movie ticket sales.

Cineworld, which acquired Regal in 2018 for \$3.6B, has reported a recent uptick in attendance though admissions are well below expectations.

The world's second-largest movie chain, after AMC Entertainment, faces coming maturities on its \$5B debt load.

A Chapter 11 filing would restructure that debt and provide additional liquidity, the company said on Aug. 22.

Cineworld and Regal theaters remain open for business

FGS Global has James Leviton, Ed Treadwell and James Thompson directing the Cineworld business.

## MATOVCIK TAKES CONSTELLATION PA POST

Ed Matovcik, who has more than 30 years of PA, strategy and government relations experience in the wine and spirits sector, has joined alcohol beverage marketer Constellation Brands as VP-public affairs.

He joins the Victor, NY-based company from Intervine, international wine consultancy, where he was CEO.

Matovcik also handled corporate communications at Treasury Wine Estates and Beringer Vineyards and served as a board member for the California Wine Institute and Napa Valley Vintners.

Constellation is parent of Robert Mondavi Winery, Kim Crawford

and Prisoner Wine Co., as well as Corona, Modelo, Negra and Pacifico beers and Casa Noble Tequila and High West Whiskey.

It earned \$389M on \$2.5B revenues for the May 31-ended quarter.



**Ed Matovcik**

## ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

**Barbara Wagner Communications** is named agency of record for **Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices NY Properties** and **BFC Partners**, a full-service developer with expertise in mixed-use and mixed-income projects. For BH-HSNYP, the agency is working to elevate broker and client awareness of the company as a leader in the residential real estate space, as well as an expert on the real estate market in New York City. BWC will lead public relations communications for BFC Partners, working to further elevate its reputation as a leader in real estate and in the communities where they build.

**MSS Media**, which specializes in education, government, real estate and lifestyle marketing, is partnering with **Amazon** to promote the company's Prime Student benefits. As part of the effort, MSS will arrange the placement of advertising on college campuses in states throughout the nation, in such locations as newspaper kiosks, bus shelters and interiors, parking garage interiors and exteriors, permanent LED signage and digital screens.

**Tegan Digital** signs on as agency of record for **Salood**, a Dallas-based nonprofit that supports pediatric cancer patients and their families. Tegan will take the lead on digital initiatives, including social media management and branding efforts. It will work to establish and strengthen Salood's mission by developing more streamlined messaging, creating a unified front across all campaign efforts. The organization's mission is to provide direct financial assistance to help families with the non-medical expenses that families incur while their child undergoes cancer treatment.

**Rubenstein Public Relations** is named agency of record for **BeyondView**, a digital platform that helps commercial real estate professionals manage and market their property portfolios. RPR will provide media relations services for the company, as well as corporate messaging and brand positioning development. BeyondView's digital technology gives users photorealistic, 3D digital representations of commercial spaces. "We are confident that RPR's expertise will help BeyondView create industry-wide relationships and highlight its technological capabilities in the media," said BeyondView CEO and founder Kul Wadhwa.

**Marcus Roberts** is selected as lead public relations partner for **PetPartners'** AKC Pet Insurance and FIGO Pet Insurance brands. The agency is charged with elevating both brand and category awareness through media relations and influencer marketing. In addition, Marcus Roberts will elevate the "Dogs at Work" platform, a program aimed at helping employers create dog-friendly office spaces and provide pet insurance as an offering to employees.

**Gong Communications** has been engaged by Greece's Sovereign Wealth Fund, **Growthfund**, to provide consultancy and communications support around sustainability and ESG in order to build the value of the fund's public assets portfolio. Gong will be part of a multi-disciplinary group of international advisors including London-headquartered ESG specialists Earth Active and Athens-based Sympraxis.





## **HOW TO COMMUNICATE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES**

The macroeconomic picture has become increasingly cloudy over the past several months as key economic indicators point to a significant economic upheaval and recession fears mount. Inflation hit a fresh [four-decade high](#) in May,



**Scott Lessne**

rising at an 8.6 percent annual rate. Oil and gas commodity prices [continue to dip](#) sharply. The IPO market has ground to a near halt, with [more than 300 companies waiting to launch a new issue](#). And the crypto and tech sector sell-offs are eliciting memories of the [dot-com crash](#).

Given this economic backdrop, financial brands may feel a natural inclination to pull back on proactive communications—whether due to weaker financial/portfolio valuations, the loss of a key piece of business or overall uncertainty in the market with no clear end in sight—and adopt a more cautious, wait-and-see approach to communications as events unfold.

That's the wrong inclination for several reasons, the most important being that your stakeholders still want to hear from you. Whether investors, business partners, customers or employees, it's important to keep your key audiences informed during times of uncertainty. No one expects you to have a crystal ball or predict what will happen tomorrow, but they will continue to look to you for perspective. In addition to providing unique insights, economic uncertainty presents an opportunity to reaffirm your company's long-term vision, underscore your core values and strategy and communicate how they will guide your organization through uncertain times.

Putting your head in the sand and not communicating during uncertain times, on the other hand, could be interpreted as a sign that your organization is struggling or has not prepared a plan to deal with business challenges. For investors and advisors, silence might also indicate that you're as lost as your clients on how to react, just when they need you most. Not communicating can result in a variety of other negative outcomes, including creating a perceived lack of transparency, providing negative fodder for the rumor mill, allowing it to run rampant with speculation or misinformation or exacerbating uncertainty.

Moreover, your competitors are likely to be talking even if you're not. If you fail to communicate, your competitors will fill the void, potentially luring new business and seizing the thought leadership high ground. They will be seen as thoughtful, informed advisors and partners worthy of trust when the dust clears.

So, what should financial brands keep in mind when deciding how to communicate in this uncertain environment? The right approach will depend on factors including past practices, the firm personality, resources, and business strategy, but some general principles can guide your response:

**Establish a steady communication cadence.** Ensure your communication is consistent in tone and cadence. When communication is sporadic, it's often less successful. Set a regular communication schedule—and stick to it—so people know they can count on you to provide reliable updates.

**Convey strength from experience.** It's important to emphasize how you've successfully navigated uncertain times in the past. This can be done by sharing stories, examples

and anecdotes of successes or accomplishments arising from previous economic cycles or financial downturns.

**There's no substitute for direct communication.** Whether you deliver your message to stakeholders via email communication, memo/letter, teleconference or in an in-person setting, direct communication has many benefits. It lets you convey a clear message, lowers the possibility of misunderstanding or confusion, and increases trust and transparency.

**Talk less about yourself.** Bankers and private investment firms can be reluctant to engage with the media when the market or recent fund performance is down. However, both are well-positioned to provide commentary on the broader investment environment and key trends affecting the economic landscape, showcasing their organizations as experts.

**Choose the right medium.** Communicators have a greater choice of media than ever. The challenge is to match the medium with the right content. For example, a deep, macroeconomic analysis probably isn't appropriate for social channels. By being selective about where your content appears, and in what form, you can deploy a nuanced communications program that connects with a variety of audiences.

**Overcommunicate with employees.** Employees are your organization's most valuable asset. It's crucial to communicate early on and often to effectively address any concerns they have about the financial strength of the business and their long-term job security. Uncertainty can also be an opportunity to lean into celebrating the company's successes or milestones. If you win a new client or launch a new service offering, consider promoting it internally and recognizing the team members who played a key role.

### **What not to do**

While advocating a bias toward action, it would be wrong to suggest that active communication during a downturn doesn't come with its own set of pitfalls. Organizations still need to be strategic and thoughtful in determining what's communicated and when. Here are three things not to do:

**Make empty statements.** During challenging times, there's a natural inclination to reassure and provide comfort, and you should respect this. But avoid using blanket statements such as "everything is fine" that lack specifics and rarely instill confidence.

**Overcomplicate the message.** Even if you're an economic expert, a deep dive into the intricacies of capital markets and the financial policy that creates volatility is probably not the best option. Use that knowledge strategically and selectively. Homing in on one key takeaway for your audience will serve you better than getting deep into the weeds.

**Suffer from paralysis by analysis.** It's understandable to take time to consider your communications options, but you may find yourself mired in possibilities and stalled by indecision. Remember, during uncertain times, your key audiences want to hear from you in a timely and transparent manner. You may not have all the answers, and it's often better to say less than wait for a perfect solution that may never come.

Whether the economy ultimately falls into a recession later in 2022 or further down the line, the ramifications of a downturn will likely remain a key concern for your investors, business partners, customers and employees for the foreseeable future. Using proactive, strategic communications will alleviate concerns for your key audiences and help them better understand how your organization can weather and succeed in a challenging business environment.

*Scott Lessne is a Senior Vice President at [Stanton](#).*

## **SHENANDOAH CO. NEEDS DIGITAL MARKETING**

Shenandoah County, Virginia, is requesting proposals from firms that can provide digital marketing services.

The county, about 90 miles west of Washington, D.C. is in search of an agency that can provide digital marketing services for its Office of Tourism & Economic Development. Shenandoah County seeks an agency that can increase brand awareness of the county as a visitor destination, stimulate overnight stays, increase visitor spending and produce a substantial economic impact for its businesses.

Deadline for proposals is 2:00 p.m. (ET) on Friday, September 2. Proposals should be mailed to: Jenna French, Director of Tourism & Economic Development; 600 North Main Street, Suite 101; Woodstock, VA 22664

A digital copy of proposals should also be sent electronically (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) to [jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us](mailto:jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us). All bidding agencies should provide three hard copies of their proposals in an envelope marked "Digital Marketing Services."

Questions should be directed to Tourism & Economic Development Director Jenna French, [jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us](mailto:jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us).

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

## **JMH HELPS QATAR'S SALAM INT'L UP US TIES**

JMH Group is advising Qatar's Salam International, a publicly traded company involved in the energy, construction, retail/distribution, trading and investment sectors, as it targets US growth.

President Biden in March designated Qatar a Major Non-NATO Ally, which gives the Arab State preferential access to US military equipment and technology equal to that of key American allies such as Japan and Australia.

Bethesda-based JMH will help Salam capitalize on the expanded opportunities offered by the MNNA designation.

It will develop and manage the engagement with the US Congress, Pentagon, State Dept and other federal agencies with the intent to encourage investment in identified areas of priority by Salam, according to the contract. It has a five-month contract with a monthly retainer of \$25K.

Salam is active in Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Bahrain, Jordan and Lebanon.

## **CREDIT SUISSE'S BYRNE SHIFTS TO TENEO**

Karina Byrne has joined Teneo as senior managing director in its strategy and communications unit.

She has more than 25 years of experience in areas such as issues/crisis management, media relations, litigation, enforcement, restructuring communications and employee engagement.

Byrne joins Teneo from Credit Suisse, where she was head of corporate communications for its investment bank & Americas operation.

Earlier, she was head of media relations for UBS Americas, associate director-corporate communications at Barclays Capital and VP-corporate communications at Thomson Financial Investor Relations.



**Karina Byrne**

## **FTI HANDLES A2'S INFANT FORMULA PUSH**

FTI Government Affairs handles New Zealand's a2 Milk Company regarding its push for federal approval to enter the US baby formula market.

The Food and Drug Administration on Aug. 10 advised a2 Milk that it is deferring further consideration of its request for enforcement discretion to import baby formula products into the US.

The FDA also sent deferral notices to other companies wanting to enter the infant formula market, according to the International Dairy Foods Assn.

Bryan Zumwalt, head of FTI's government affairs unit, is handling the a2 Milk push. He's the former executive VP-PA for the Consumer Brands Assn.

John Steitz, managing director in FTI's [strategic communications group](#) and one-time chief of staff to Sen. John Kennedy (R-LA), and Richard Kottmeyer, a food safety expert, also work the a2 Milk effort.



## **RNC SPOKESPERSON DENNARD IS OUT**

Paris Dennard, national spokesperson for the Republican National Committee and director for Black media affairs, is out, according to chief of staff Mike Reed.

He had served as a high-profile on-air surrogate for former president Donald Trump and during the 2020 campaign was on the advisory board for Black Voices for Trump.

Earlier, Dennard was senior director of strategic communications for the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. He also did a stint in George W. Bush's White House in the offices of political/legislative affairs and public liaison.

Dennard runs PD Consulting Group strategic communications shop, which he launched in 2012.



**Paris Dennard**

## **LONGACRE HANDLES CSC'S FLEXSTEEL BID**

Longacre Square Partners is handling private equity firm CSC Generation Holdings' unsolicited bid to acquire residential furniture maker Flexsteel Industries.

The \$20.80-per-share cash offer represents a 22 percent premium over Flexsteel's \$17.10 closing price on Aug. 23.

CSC believes its "digital first" strategy can spark the financial performance of Flexsteel, which earned \$1.8M on \$544M in revenues for the fiscal year ended June 30.

NASDAQ-traded Flexsteel chalked up a \$23M profit during the 2021 period.

Flexsteel acknowledged receiving CSC's non-binding offer on Aug. 24 and promised that its board will evaluate the proposal to determine the best course of action for the company and its shareholders.

[FGS Global's](#) George Sard, Jared Levy and Bryan Locke handle media for Flexsteel.

Longacre Square's Greg Marose and Kate Sylvester represent CSC.





## EX-BUSH II AIDE LANDS AT TRUIST FINANCIAL

Scott Stanzel, who held several key communications positions in the George W. Bush White House, is joining Truist Financial Corporation as EVP and CCO effective Oct. 1.



**Scott Stanzel**

Stanzel will lead Truist's corporate communications function, overseeing internal and external communications from the bank's Charlotte, NC, headquarters, reporting to chief legal officer and head of public affairs Ellen Fitzsimmons.

Most recently, he was managing VP for corporate communications at Capital One Financial Corporation. He was previously director, corporate communications at Amazon, a senior

product manager at Microsoft and ran his own firm, Stanzel Communications.

In the Bush II White House, Stanzel managed media relations and served as a spokesman for the President on issues including domestic policy and homeland security.

## ORANGE COUNTY NONPROFIT NEEDS PR HELP

Waymakers, an Orange County, CA-based nonprofit organization dedicated to building safer communities, is requesting proposals from public relations and/or marketing firms.

Waymakers helps individuals experiencing conflict and crisis, be it through sheltering children and youth, supporting victims of crime, redirecting youth offenders and educating communities about sexual assault, human trafficking, family violence and drug/alcohol abuse.



Scope of the work includes providing media and public relations services, developing a comprehensive strategic communications/marketing plan and crisis communications support.

Deadline for proposals is 5:00 p.m. (PT) on Friday, September 9. Proposals should be sent electronically to [rfp@WaymakersOC.org](mailto:rfp@WaymakersOC.org). Proposals can also be mailed to: Waymakers; 1221 E. Dyer Road, Suite 120; Santa Ana, CA 92705; Attn: Public Relations RFP

Questions should be directed to [rfp@WaymakersOC.org](mailto:rfp@WaymakersOC.org) by September 7 and must include "Strategic Communications RFP" in the subject line.

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

## KEKST CNC WORKS GRANT THORNTON'S DEAL

Kekst CNC is working with Grant Thornton as it sells its public sector advisory practice to Guidehouse, a portfolio company of Veritas Capital, which invests in companies operating at the intersection of technology and government.

Seth Siegel, CEO of Grant Thornton, says the deal enables his firm to sharpen its focus on its integrated offerings across its audit, tax and corporate advisory offerings.

The transaction is expected to close by year-end.

Grant Thornton generated \$2B in revenues during fiscal 2021. It has more than 9,000 staffers.

Kekst CNC has Daniel Yunger, Nathan Riggs, Anntal Silver, Mark Fallati and Hallie Wolff handling the Grant Thornton deal.

Publicis Groupe owns Kekst CNC.

## MEDIA MANEUVERS

NBC may be chopping an hour from its nightly prime time schedule, according to a report in the Wall Street Journal. The plan would eliminate the 10 pm to 11 pm hour, which would be given back to local stations to program at their discretion. However, the report also says that the network's late-night schedule would likely be moved back to 10:30 pm or 11 pm, giving the "The Tonight Show" with Jimmy Fallon a head start on its competition at ABC and CBS. NBCUniversal Television and Streaming chairman Mark Lazarus has already eliminated programming in the 1:30 am to 2 am time slot and handed that back to affiliates.



**Sean Hannity** leads a long lineup of Fox News personalities who have been called for a deposition in the ongoing defamation suit by Dominion Voting Systems against the network in Delaware Superior Court. Also slated to appear are Tucker Carlson and Lou Dobbs. The *New York Times* reports that others set to join that list are Fox News Media chief executive Suzanne Scott and president Jay Wallace, with Rupert and Lachlan Murdoch both possibilities in the coming weeks.

**Guardian Media Group** names Anna Bateson as its chief executive. Bateson previously held the interim CEO spot at GMG for several months in 2019-20 and also served as chief customer officer. She replaces Keith Underwood, who has held the role of interim chief executive since the resignation of Annette Thomas in June 2021. Most recently, Bateson was CEO of Josh Wood Colour, an e-commerce beauty brand. Before coming to the *Guardian* in 2016, she was director, global consumer marketing at YouTube.

## ON THE MOVE

**Denny's** moves **John Dillon** from the chief brand officer position at the restaurant chain to president of Denny's Corporation. Dillon has been at Denny's since 2007. Before that, he was CMO for the Houston Rockets. As Denny's CMO, Dillon has heightened Denny's America's Diner brand positioning and launched the Denny's on Demand delivery platform and increased Denny's purpose-led social responsibility impact.

**The Greater New Orleans Foundation** names **Courtney Thomas Barnes** VP-communications & PA.

Barnes was most recently VP-communications at Berni Consulting. She has also served as communications manager for New Orleans mayor Mitch Landrieu and CCO for the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans.

**imre** hires **Sam Ingram** as SVP of digital experience and **Hui Tang** as head of marketing analytics. Ingram comes to imre from Bristol Myers Squibb, where he led engagement planning for worldwide customer capabilities. He previously led digital initiatives for Nestle Health Science, Prudential Financial and Sharp Electronics. At imre, he will bring client-side perspective to the agency's digital experience team. Tang was most recently VP of marketing science at SOLVE(D), a part of FCB Health. At imre, she focuses on integrating measurement solutions into client engagements.



**John Dillon**

# COMMENTARY



Ron DeSantis

**Really, Ron?** Florida governor Ron DeSantis, who somehow thinks he's presidential timber, has trained his "war on wokeness" sights on environmental, social and governance investing.

Fresh off his campaign against Disney, the "Don't Say Gay" law restricting the discussion of LGBTQ matters in schools and his push to disenfranchise Black voters, DeSantis has prohibited the Sunshine State's \$227B retirement fund from considering ESG rankings

when making investment decisions or voting proxies.

"Corporate power has increasingly been utilized to impose an ideological agenda on the American people through the perversion of financial investment priorities," said DeSantis on Aug. 23. He said Florida's tax dollars and proxy votes "will no longer be commandeered by Wall Street financial firms."

My hunch is that Floridians, especially those living on its coasts, would look favorably on companies that are committed to combating global warming. They would rather not have their houses washed away.

"I want to have the values not of Davos imposed on us but of places like Destin and Dunedin where I grew up," said DeSantis, a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Law.

His resolution banning ESG takes a gratuitous swipe at the Biden administration, which "has made clear its intention to encourage investment using ESG factors."

That is a cheap shot from a guy who is ever so desperate to persuade the MAGA crowd that he has a better shot at the White House than the leader of their cult.

**Kudos to Edelman for refusing a big "greenwashing" gig.** Stephen Horn, South Africa country director for Clean Creatives, has praised Edelman for refusing to provide PR support for the East African Crude Oil Pipeline project that is being advised and possibly financed by Johannesburg-based Standard Bank Group.

The proposed 1,200-km pipeline, which would carry crude oil from Uganda to Tanzania's port of Tanga, would despoil wetlands, nature reserves and sensitive ecosystems and displace rural communities, wrote Horn in an opinion piece [published in Business Day](#).

Standard Bank Group, which is Africa's biggest lender, fired Edelman for its unwillingness to promote the pipeline, or as Horn puts it: "refusing to put lipstick on this pig."

While praising Edelman, Horn believes the firm "still has a long way to go to clean up its act," noting that it has worked for ExxonMobil over the years to play down the risks associated with climate change.

Clean Creatives is the global campaign that pressures PR firms and ad agencies into ending ties with fossil fuel clients and projects such as the EACOP.

The Standard Bank Group's EACOP PR work is on the loose and available to any firm willing to risk its corporate reputation and public scolding by Clean Creatives and other environmental groups.

**America owes a debt of gratitude to Doctor Anthony Fauci** for his strong and reassuring PR leadership during the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis.

He was an oasis of leadership amid the incompetence and chaos of the Trump White House.

Fauci's resignation as Joe Biden's chief medical officer paves a road for the president to follow. The 81-year-old Fauci is stepping down from his leadership post at the National Institutes of Health in December after a 38-year run.

He plans to "pursue the next chapter" of his career, which includes encouraging young people to enter government service. That's exactly what 79-year-old Biden should do after the midterm elections.

He should pursue his own next chapter, which is clearing the way for younger Democrats to compete for the presidential nomination.

Fauci is calling it quits at the NIH at the age of 81. Biden would be 81 on Election Day in 2024 and 82 on Inauguration Day in 2025.

C'mon Joe. It's time to step to the sidelines and coach the kids.

You have already achieved more (e.g., biggest global warming legislation, lowering cost of prescription drugs for Medicare, infrastructure law, COVID-19-fighting American Rescue Plan, rallying allies in support of Ukraine) than what any American could ask for in a president.

A second term would only jeopardize your legacy.

**Crikey! Thin-skinned Lachlan Murdoch is suing a tiny Australian website** called Crikey, its editor and a journalist for defamation over an article that alleged his family played a role in the Capitol Hill riots.

The article ran June 29 and was taken down following the first legal threat from Team Murdoch.

The 50-year-old mass media heir filed his lawsuit against Crikey on August 22, after it taunted him to do so. Crikey is now championing itself as a fighter for press freedom.

The influential *Financial Times* agrees, calling Murdoch's filing a test case for freedom of the press Down Under.

Crikey, for its part, is mining PR gold from Lachlan's snit, positioning itself as a worthy heir to Lachlan's feisty dad, Rupert, who relished a good media squabble.

The website noted that during the 1950s, when Rupert was a fledgling owner of *The News* in Adelaide, he went toe-to-toe with a larger competitor. *The Advertiser* had threatened to drive The News out of business unless Rupert sold out to it.

Rupert didn't run to seek legal protection. Instead, he published the threatening letter on the front page of *The News*.

Lachlan should drop the lawsuit. He's wasting his time and damaging his image by pursuing a tiny media operation.

He has bigger legal issues to worry about, such as the \$1.6B lawsuit lodged by Dominion Voting Systems that alleges Fox Corp. and the Murdochs allowed Fox News to run false claims that the voting machine company rigged the 2020 presidential election for Joe Biden.

What would 91-year-old Rupert do? He would probably applaud Crikey. Or maybe offer to buy it. —Kevin McCauley