



Jack O'Dwyer,  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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

December 21, 2015 Vol. 48 No. 50

## WV TECH PUSH SEEKS PR SPARK

The technology-focused public-private agency working to diversify West Virginia's economy is on the hunt for a firm to develop a communications plan.

TechConnectWV encompasses private, public, higher education, research and nonprofit sectors. The nonprofit corporation, under the auspices of the West Virginia Coalition for Technology-Based Economic Development, released an RFP on Dec. 11 for a firm to create a comprehensive communications strategy, including social media, supporting TCWV's mission to build up the tech sector in the coal-dependent state.



The state has an existing base in chemical and advanced material industries, as well as federal operations in biometrics and a university research base in biotechnology.

The resulting pact will run through September 2017. RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1YuMlwb>.

## L&C MAKES FIRST US DEAL, ACQUIRES EDF

Llorente & Cuenca, the PR group focused on Spain, Portugal and Latin America, has made its first US deal with the acquisition of Miami's EDF Communications.

L&C, which secured private equity backing in June, has made four acquisitions in the past six months.

EDF specializes in Latin multinationals operating in the US, US companies with Latin American interests and related matters like M&A in the region.

The firm was founded in 2001 by Erich de la Fuente (pictured), an Edelman and Burson-Marsteller alum who continues to run EDF.



de la Fuente

The combined L&C and EDF Miami operation includes 12 staffers. M&C opened in Miami in July led by partner Alejandro Romero, the firm's Latin America CEO.

EDF also has outposts in Mexico, Columbia, Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Costa Rica, all of which will be integrated into L&C.

L&C bought Brazil's S/A Comunicacao, a majority stake in Impossible Tellers, and digital shop Cink.



Happy Holidays & New Year to all our readers. Next issue of the NL will be Jan. 4, 2016. Follow news on [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com).

## WEN STYLES PR FOR WEN HAIR PRODUCTS

Wen Haircare has engaged Abernathy MacGregor Group as the direct-marketed hair product line faces legal and PR woes amid allegations of hair loss among users.

Wen, developed by Hollywood stylist Chaz Dean, is sold by Guthy|Renker, the direct marketing giant behind Proactive and It Cosmetics, among other brands.

Users in 40 states filed a class-action suit this week against Wen and Guthy-Renker, claiming Wen's conditioner caused scalp irritation, hair damage and hair loss, among other issues. A bevy of celebrities have marketed the brand. AbMac Los Angeles VP Joe Hixson is speaking for Wen, which issued a statement claiming there is no scientific evidences for the charges. "We intend to vigorously contest the allegations made against our products," read the statement.

## BRUNSWICK ADVISES DELL SECUREWORKS IPO

Brunswick Group is securing PR for Dell's spinoff of SecureWorks, the cloud computing security company.

Dell, which acquired SW in 2011 for \$612M, said Dec. 17 the unit filed to go public in an IPO. Number of shares and price are to be determined as the S-1 filing used a \$100M placeholder for the offering.

SW helps secure data from cyber attacks. Fiscal 2015 revenues were \$190.7M, rising to \$245.4M for the first nine months of fiscal 2016. Net loss for 2015 was \$38.5M. Brunswick's San Francisco office is advising SecureWorks through the IPO process. The *Wall Street Journal* reported SW filed confidentially several months ago, but went public this week as required three weeks before a pitch is made to investors in an IPO roadshow.

Dell itself is preparing to close a \$67B deal for EMC.

## CISION BUYS PR NEWSWIRE FOR \$841M

Cision has inked a deal to acquire PR Newswire for \$841M from UBM, after months of speculation as the London-based publisher and trade events producer sought a buyer of the profitable news disseminator.

The price tag includes \$810M in cash and \$31M in equity. Cision is owned by the private equity firm GTCR, which has cobbled together Cision, Vocus and Gorkana Group to create a PR services powerhouse.

(Continued on page 6)

## **TOP OBAMA AIDE HEADS TO GOFUNDME**

Dan Pfeiffer, one of President Obama's top advisors for communications, has moved to crowdfunding start-up GoFundMe as VP of communications and policy.

Pfeiffer, traveling press secretary and communications director for the 2008 presidential campaign, served in the White House as comms. and senior advisor to the President. He stepped down from the White House in March.

He is based in the Bay Area for Menlo Park-based GoFundMe, which helped raise more than \$1B for users in 2015.



**Pfeiffer**

A venture capital investor group this year bought a majority stake in GoFundMe, valuing the company around \$600M.

Chief product officer David Hahn said of Pfeiffer's appointment: "It's inspiring to see the sheer number of people raising money on GoFundMe to help those around them - their friends, their family, their community. Dan will help us capture and share the amazing stories from these heroes."

Zeno Group works with GoFundMe on the PR front.

## **GAO: EPA CAMPAIGN BROKE FED PR RULE**

The Environmental Protection Agency's social media campaign supporting clean water legislation violated bans against publicity, propaganda and lobbying by the federal government, the Government Accountability Office said in a report this week.

EPA lawyers said the agency did nothing wrong in its PR efforts. The government entity spent around \$65,000 on resources for the campaign raising awareness of the proposed Waters of the United States rule, a PR push executed by EPA staff.

The GAO singled out the EPA's use of the social media platform Thunderclap, which allows users to share a message en masse to a group of supporters, along with a blog post that promoted the message to encourage support of the proposed rule. Similar efforts to tackle blowback against the rule were also called into question by the GAO as the EPA linked to external websites that encouraged users to sign up to support the rule.

Federal law prohibits government agencies from lobbying or producing covert propaganda and self-aggrandizement.

In lieu of fines, the GAO instructed the EPA to produce a full accounting of the campaign costs and a report to President Barack Obama and Congress acknowledging the violations.

## **MORGAN MARKETING & PR SOLD**

Irvine, CA-based Morgan Marketing & Public Relations has been sold to agency VP Kristin Daher.

Daher will now assume the role of agency president. The deal, the financial terms of which were not disclosed, becomes effective Jan. 1. Current employees and clients will be unaffected by the transaction.

The agency, which in 2015 celebrated its 25-year an-

niversary, provides marketing, media relations and event-planning services in the restaurant, retail, hospitality, real estate and legal industries. The agency has represented more than 100 brands, including Del Taco, Lugano Diamonds, Wienerschnitzel, Juice It Up!, Golden Island Gourmet Snacks and Philly's Best.

"My decision to sell Morgan Marketing has been a bittersweet one. I am proud of what the agency has accomplished, along with its national reputation for producing high caliber creative work," said Morgan Marketing & Public Relations founder and president Melinda Morgan Kartsonis in a statement. "I am confident that my firm's clients and employees are in the very best hands with Kristin. I'm proud to create this incredible opportunity for her and those who join Kristin on this exciting journey."

## **VALEANT BOLSTERS PR**

VianovoValeant, the US pharma facing scrutiny over its drug prices, has brought in Washington's Vianovo for PR support.

Reuters reported the company also hired the DC law firm Covington & Burling as it faces Congressional probes of its drug pricing.

The politically connected Vianovo is led by partners including former President George W. Bush aide Tucker Eskew, Public Strategies alum Blaine Bull and Martha Stewart Living corporate comms. and IR vet Katherine Nash Goehring.

Bridgewater, N.J.-based Valeant's shares have taken a beating since both houses of Congress took an interest in its pricing policies this fall. Rising drug prices have also become a political campaign issue in the presidential election, ratcheting up pressure on Valeant and other pharmaceutical companies.

Valeant has worked with crisis and financial specialist Sard Verbinnen & Co. for M&A PR in the past, including its \$10.1B February acquisition of Salix Pharmaceuticals and failed hostile bid for Allergan in 2014.

## **HISTORIC YBOR CITY SEEKS IMAGE BUFF**

Tampa's Ybor City district, looking to tackle and build on a partying image, has cast a net for agency help to position the historic area through tourism promotion, brand awareness and other marketing efforts.

The Ybor City Development Corp. released an RFP to conduct a strategic assessment of its current image and develop a plan to improve on the National Historic Landmark District, noting negative public perceptions that must be addressed.

Forged by immigrant cigar rollers pre-World War II, the district fell into decline before an arts and nightlife scene emerged in the 1980s and '90s.

"Negative public perceptions must be combatted by focusing on the many positive features that give this special area its personality," reads the RFP.

Proposals are due Jan. 5 with an optional pre-proposal conference set for Dec. 21.

RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1J1i7Py>.

**HAIK WALKS FROM WASHINGTON POST**

Cory Haik, a senior digital officer at the *Washington Post*, has left that position to become chief strategy officer at burgeoning millennial news hub Mic.

Haik, who began working for WAPO in 2010, was promoted in July to executive director of emerging news products. Formerly executive producer and senior editor of digital news, she headed key digital and mobile initiatives at the publication, and was responsible for the rollout of WAPO's Rainbow app for Kindle Fire.

**Haik**

Prior to her tenure at the *Washington Post*, Haik was assistant managing editor at the *Seattle Times*, and managing editor for *Times-Picayune* digital property nola.com.

In Haik's new role, which Mic created specifically for her arrival, she'll be responsible for refining the site's editorial, product and revenue strategy. The site's revenue model is primarily centered on branded content.

Chris Altschek and Jake Horowitz founded new York-based Mic — previously known as PolicyMic — in 2011. The site, which now sees more than 20 million unique visitors a month, in June hired NPR executive editor Madhulika Sikka.

**TIME HIRES NEW DIGITAL HEAD**

Time Inc. has appointed Jennifer L. Wong president of Time Inc. Digital, a newly created position.

Wong will be in charge of Time's digital strategies and operations across its massive portfolio of 60 online brands, including Time, Sports Illustrated, Entertainment Weekly and People. She'll report to chairman and CEO Joe Ripp, who said that Wong "will accelerate our digital transformation and help us realize the promise of our powerful media brands."

Wong begins in her new role January 4.

Wong was previously chief business officer of lifestyle site PopSugar, a role she held for four years. Prior to that she was global head of business operations at AOL, where she oversaw style, travel, food, and home content sites in AOL's Huffington Post Media Group.

**Wong**

"Jen is an executive that is both highly analytical and creative," Ripp said in a statement. "She has a proven record growing digital content and commerce businesses. Jen has succeeded in complex organizations and achieved success at each company where she has worked."

The *New York Post* reported yesterday that Time Inc. had mulled buying PopSugar outright earlier this year but ultimately declined.

Time, whose 2015 digital investments have been historic, last week inked a major video distribution deal with Hulu, Yahoo and Zealot Networks platforms, and in

October acquired entertainment and lifestyle site HelloGiggles.

**KAPLOW AMONG MATRIX AWARD WINNERS**

Kaplow Communications founder and CEO Liz Kaplow is among the list of luminaires to be honored with a Matrix Award next year from New York Women in Communications.

That prestigious award recognizes the achievements of women in the communications industry. It has been awarded annually since 1970.

NYWICI, which announced its roster of 2016 honorees today, will celebrate its Matrix Awards honorees during an April 25 luncheon at the Waldorf-Astoria.

The ceremony this year will be hosted by Interpublic Group and emceed by TV personality and former producer Andy Cohen, who also hosts Bravo program "Watch What Happens Live." About 1,000 are expected to attend.

Other 2016 Matrix Award recipients include:

Linda Boff, chief marketing officer of GE

Nancy Dubuc, president and CEO of A+E Networks

Lena Dunham, creator and star of HBO's "Girls"

Nancy Gibbs, editor of *Time*

Carol Hamilton, president of L'Oreal Luxe USA

Melody Hobson, president of Ariel Investments

Janice Min, co-president and chief creative officer

of *The Hollywood Reporter*, Billboard Media Group

"2016 is the 25th Anniversary of the founding of Kaplow Communications, so the timing of this award couldn't be more meaningful," Kaplow told O'Dwyer's. "I am proud of what we have accomplished and I am honored to be counted among this formidable group of women achievers."

Kaplow is a former NYWICI president. Current president is Wired chief revenue officer and publisher Kimberly Kelleher. Previous Matrix Awards recipients include Christiane Amanpour, Geena Davis, Joan Didion, Arianna Huffington, Queen Latifah, Annie Leibovitz, Gloria Steinem, Toni Morrison, Bernadette Peters, Meryl Streep, Diane Sawyer, Helen Thomas, Barbara Walters, and Anna Wintour.

A portion of the Matrix Awards' proceeds fund the NYWICI Foundation, which grants scholarships to young women planning a career in communications. To date, the Foundation has allotted scholarships totaling more than \$1 million.

**ROYALTIES TO CLIMB FOR STREAMING MUSIC**

The Copyright Royalty Board, the trio of judges that sets the terms for U.S. copyright licenses, have decided to raise royalty rates for streaming music services.

CRB judges yesterday delivered their decision to the Register of Copyrights for review, which sets streaming music royalty rates for the next five years.

According to a statement released yesterday by the CRB, the new rates for commercial subscription services will be \$0.0022 per-performance, or 22 cents for every 100 streams.

(Continued on page 4)

**PR & SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS & VIEWS****STREAMING ROYALTIES** (Cont'd from page 3)

The rate for commercial non-subscription services will be \$0.0017 per-performance. Those rates go into effect at the beginning of 2016.

The new rates do not affect streaming services such as Spotify and Apple Music, which negotiate directly with record labels. Interactive radio station Pandora, however, which pays licensing fees to performing rights agencies like BMI, ASCAP, and SESAC, is subject to the CRB's royalty rates.

Pandora — which currently pays a rate of \$0.0014 per-performance for its ad-supported platform and \$0.0025 per-performance for its subscription service — would see 21 percent higher licensing fees as a result of yesterday's CRB decision.

Oakland, CA-based Pandora, which bought live events company Ticketfly in October for \$450 million, boasts about 80 million monthly listeners and holds a 70 percent share of the U.S. Internet radio market.

Pandora in October posted disappointing third-quarter revenues, causing share prices to plummet.

Pandora CEO Brian McAndrews, in a statement to investors yesterday, called the Copyright Royalty Board decision "a balanced rate that we can work with and grow from."

**POLL: CLINTON MOST DISHONEST CANDIDATE**

Former Secretary of State and 2016 Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton has a problem with honesty, at least insofar as how she's perceived by the American public.

A December Economist/YouGov poll shows that Clinton, when compared among the leading seven Democratic and Republican candidates for presidency, ranks lowest among the public overall in terms of perceived honesty and trustworthiness.

More than half of those polled — 53 percent — described the leading Democratic candidate as "not honest and trustworthy." An overwhelming 85 percent of Republican respondents described her as dishonest, and 56 percent of independents said the same, while 24 percent of Democrats agreed with this statement.

The only leading candidate who comes close to rivaling Clinton's deficit of trust among Americans is Donald Trump, who was characterized as dishonest by 51 percent of respondents. Trump, similarly, was described as "honest" by only 33 percent of those polled, only two points above Clinton. Clinton's low 31 percent rank of being characterized as "honest" was beaten only by Senator Ted Cruz, who ranked at 29 percent.

Leading the pack for perceived honesty and trustworthiness was her Democratic rival, Senator Bernie Sanders, who had the lowest levels of perceived dishonesty — only 27 percent — among those polled overall.

The poll did reveal a few silver linings for Clinton: more than half — 59 percent — of Democrats polled considered Clinton honest, and most Americans overall claimed they prefer Clinton over Sanders as the Democratic nominee.

"Clinton's low trust numbers clearly pose a challenge for her campaign," Will Jordan, YouGov America

elections editor, told O'Dwyer's. "However, she continues to be rated highly in other areas, like strength and leadership ability, which may be offsetting some of the effect."

A similar Economist/YouGov Poll conducted last year revealed that, among respondents who dislike Clinton, "liar" was the word used more than any other to describe her. Among respondents who like Clinton, "strong" was the most common word used.

**PR GOALS TO WORK TOWARD IN 2016**

By Courtney Lukitsch

As strategic and creative planners, PR professionals welcome each new business year, as it provides the opportunity to expand upon goals and aspirations, both internal to an agency and externally, client-side.

A topic close to our hearts at Gotham PR is the need for creative leadership. As our industry continues to expand its purview into content marketing, social media and digital media relations, it becomes more important than ever to maintain a creative edge on the competition.

The need for creative leaders is not a new topic, yet one that has little written on the importance and impact it may have for business. Published via PRNewser and O'Dwyer's, iterations of this concept are seen as auspicious for 2016. Attributes that the Harvard Business Review emphasizes for creative leadership include the following characteristics:

- They build core enthusiast communities inside and outside of their organizations
- They jump-start their innovation journey with storytelling
- They achieve big change through a series of small experiments

An interesting prognostication from the C-Suite, according to a recent *Forbes* forecasting study for 2016, is that digital marketing will cease, as marketers shift to marketing in a digital world. This is already in evidence within the PR industry.

On the resolution side of the business, PR pros may also adapt new behaviors that they can also leverage to the benefit of clients.

According to the *Observer*, be mindful of the 12 habits that are killing productivity. Instead, try efficiency hacks that emphasize focus rather than multi-tasking; setting boundaries as to the number of emails sent and checked incessantly; delegating responsibilities and tasks on the agency team; knowing how to say no; track results and increase reporting; establish routines; and work shorter but more effective hours.

Maintain a sense of humor PR people! An excellent appropriation of a social media pop cultural phenomenon on Jimmy Kimmel Live, Celebrities Reading Mean Tweets, the PR world now has its own via PR Daily. Enjoy PR Pros reading "Mean Media Tweets" as it parodies the importance of taking things with a grain of salt, reminding all to embrace the New Year in a lighthearted manner.

*Courtney Lukitsch is Principal & Founder of Gotham Public Relations with offices in New York & London.*

## NEWS OF PR FIRMS

### **GOLIN MERGES CHINA WITH MAGIC**

Golin has merged its China operation into Magic Group, forming GolinMagic.

Golin said the operation includes a staff of more than 150 in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou and evolves from a strategic partnership first formed in December 2013.



Magic Group founder Catherine Zhou called the move a "natural next step" in an ongoing partnership. Zhou (healthcare) and colleague Frank Ren (corporate), along with Golin Shanghai GM Sarah Chin (consumer) will lead the venture as managing directors.

Adrian Looi heads digital while Taiwan managing director Rachel Hsueh helms tech for the China venture.

### **PEPPERCOMM COMEDY EVENT AIDS ASPCA**

Seven staffers of Peppercomm performed stand-up comedy at the Broadway Comedy Club last week for the dual purpose of sharpening their presentation skills and benefiting the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Steve Cody and Ed Moed, co-CEOs, are dog lovers. The firm's ad campaign features Pepper, a Labrador, who appears in different costumes such as a Burberry trench coat or a Brooks Brothers suit. The event raised \$4,300 for ASPCA.



Steve Cody, Deb Brown  
Photo: Sharlene Spingler

Staffer Deb Brown had a solution for the topless women who have been parading around Times Square in recent months: "Winter."

Chris Piedmont lamented about being a twin, saying he "didn't even get the womb to himself."

Joel Schwartzberg of the ASPCA Communications Dept., who owns 15 cats, said that ASPCA stands for the "American Society for the Perpetuation of Cry Worthy Ads." The Society got its start in 1866 when Henry Bergh saw a horse being beaten in the street. Those who abuse animals now face prison terms.

Clayton Fletcher, chief comedy officer of Peppercomm, helps staffers to put together their five-minute comedy routines.

Cody, who served as the emcee, talked about his efforts to help people who are not too tall. He plans to hire an elf for Christmas to help the elf supplement his earnings from Macy's.

Peppercomm is a top 25 firm in the O'Dwyer's rankings.

## NEW ACCOUNTS

### West

**Allison+Partners**, Los Angeles/Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, as lead consumer marketing agency in the US and Canada, following a competitive review. The client releases around 100 titles per year and A+P will handle campaign development, media and talent relations, content marketing, events and other support. Current work includes the 25th anniversary of "Home Alone" and "Star Wars: Episode VII." LA GM Carline Jorgensen is strategic lead on the account, supported by SVP Stacey Johnes. Staff in New York and Phoenix will work on the account as well. **Veritas Communications**, a sister MDC Partners shop, handles Canada.



**PMBC Group**, Los Angeles/rhubarb studios, tech accelerator and coaching program for startups, for PR for the program and its co-founders focused on the investment and tech spaces, and Minkasu, mobile payments services, for PR.

### New York Area

**Lou Hammond & Associates**, New York/Seatrade Cruise Global, business-to-business conference for the cruise industry, slated to move from Miami to Fort Lauderdale in 2016, for PR for the event and to design and creating The Show Daily in hard and digital editions; Cultural Council of Palm Beach, arts and tourism advocate for the county; Gibbes Museum of Art, 115-year-old Charleston museum undergoing major renovations and set to reopen in spring 2016; JW Marriott Minneapolis Mall of America, new property including 342 guestrooms and one of the largest event spaces in the Twin Cities; INFONewHaven, for a digital audit and social media takeover and the launch of an email newsletter; Charleston Symphony Orchestra, and 5Church Charleston, eatery, for PR.

**Magrino Digital**, New York/Chateau d'Esclans, French estate and winery; The Ranch at Live Oak, retreat set on Hopalong Cassidy's historic working ranch in Southern California; Highland Dallas, Hilton Curio boutique hotel, and Windsor Properties, residential community in Vero Beach, Fla., all for digital marketing.

### Southeast

**Dodge Communications**, Atlanta/CareSync, software and services for chronic disease management, for strategic comms.

**Hayworth PR**, Ormond Beach, Fla./Springmaid Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach, SC, resort being rebranded as a DoubleTree by Hilton; Kimpton Cardinal Hotel, Winston-Salem, NC, set to open in early 2016; and Wyndham Reef Resort, Grand Cayman.

### International

**Central Hub**, Hong Kong/The International Coach Federation, global group focused on advancing professional coaching, as AOR in China, following a search process by RFP Associates. Stanton Communications picked up US PR duties this year.

**NEWS OF SERVICES****CISION ACQUIRES PR NEWSWIRE** (Cont'd from 1)

UBM was expected to garner more than \$700M for PRN and Cision was among reported suitors of the unit.

With the deal, Cision adds a legacy news dissemination service to its tech-based offerings, which include the low-cost PRweb, as well as Gorkana's and Cision's own PR platforms. Parent GTCR bought Vocus in 2014 in a \$446.5M deal.

The sale will have to clear US regulators and UBM shareholders but is expected to close in the first quarter of Q1. A special dividend of around \$371M will go to existing shareholders.

PRN CEO Robert Gray said the company's combination with Cision will provide customers "an unparalleled breadth of solutions enabling communicators to be efficient, data-driven and accountable."

Cision chief Peter Granat added PRN's "outstanding reputation and global reach" add a new dimension to the company.

**D S SIMON PARTNERS WITH GUINNESS**

Record-breaking resource Guinness World Records has teamed up with New York-based D S Simon Media for a joint marketing collaboration.

D S Simon Media will help brands promote their Guinness World Records efforts by performing video services of those record-breaking attempts, and will promote and distribute those campaigns across broadcast and social platforms for the purpose of creating engaging, viral content.

The initiative will both bolster the Guinness World Records name, and will use record-breaking as a means of engaging consumers and generating media coverage.

"Attempting to set a Guinness World Records title is a fantastic way to generate positive media coverage and add a fun spirit to your organization while increasing consumer and employee engagement," said D S Simon Media president and CEO Doug Simon. "Bringing a Guinness World Records record attempt to life through video across social platforms represents a wonderful opportunity to create significant and lasting value for your organization."

D S Simon Media, which last month changed its name from D S Simon Productions, celebrates its 30-year anniversary next year.

**PRSA/NEW YORK MEMBERSHIP OFFER**

The New York Chapter of PR Society of America, in a year-end membership drive, will provide up to \$200 in extra benefits to those who join by Dec. 31.

New members will be enrolled in the chapter without having to pay the \$90 dues. They will also be able to skip the regular national initiation fee of \$65 and can also join one of the Society's 14 sections at no extra cost.

The only payment required is the \$255 annual dues. The code CPB15 must be used.

Richard Edelman of Edelman, Peter Finn of Finn Partners and Ed Moed of Peppercomm spent two hours with chapter members Dec. 8 describing the attributes they look for in new employees.

**PEOPLE****Joined**

**Michele Landry**, VP of corporate communications for semiconductor maker Spansion, to Tanis Communications, Mountain View, Calif., as an executive VP. Landry is charged with growing PR and employee communications practices for the Silicon Valley-based tech agency. Her resume spans the agency and corporate realms. She directed PR and executive communications for Openwave and was a senior VP for The Weber Group.

**Landry**

**Aaron Alberico**, senior A/M, Public Affairs Engagement, and **Cyrus Rassool**, senior program associate, Freedom House, to Glen Echo Group, Washington, D.C., as senior associates. **Kris Carpenter** joins as chief financial officer.

**Larry Bernard**, a veteran writer and PR pro in the healthcare and science fields, to the US Dept. of Energy's Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, as director of comms. He had been consulting for the past year since leaving a senior PR role with the Network for Excellence in Health Innovation in Cambridge. The Princeton facility, based in Plainsboro, N.J., spawned from a government program to control thermonuclear reactions during the Cold War dubbed Project Matterhorn, is managed by Princeton Univ. for the Dept. of Energy. Bernard previously worked in the drug and healthcare field, serving as senior comms. manager at Pfizer and Amgen. He also directed public affairs at the Schepens Eye Research Institute at Harvard Medical School and was a PR writer for Cornell University.

**Leesa Eichberger**, North American chief marketing officer for Jenny Craig International, to Farmers Insurance, Los Angeles, as head of brand and sponsorships, effective January 4. She was marketing VP for Vonage, and previously held positions at Ogilvy & Mather and Poppe Tyson. Farmers' is the third-largest personal insurer in the U.S.

**Connie Ludwin**, former CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey, to Taft and Partners, Lawrenceville, N.J., as director of operations. **Anne Wallentine**, intern for the National Portrait Gallery, joins as comms. coordinator.

**Nikki Neu**, who ran her own shop for the past three years, to Vox Solid Communications, Las Vegas, as PR manager. She was an A/E at SK+G Advertising and developed content for Vegas.com.

**Neu, Egeskov**

**Alyssa Egeskov**, a former intern, joins as an A/C.

**Promoted**

**Megan Keohane** to senior A/E, Buchanan PR, Bryn Mawr, Pa. She joined in 2013. Jennifer Tedeschi was upped to assistant A/E after signing on in 2014. The firm also hired John Reynolds, intern, as an A/C.

## REVIEW OF 2015

**The outburst of terrorism at year's end, including the massacres** in Paris Nov. 13 and San Bernadino Dec. 2, plus threats of continued incidents in the future, dominated media coverage and defined the year.

A late December *New York Times*/CBS poll found 44% of those surveyed fear a terror attack in the next few months.

Politicians as well as companies and institutions are taking into account the increased public anxiety over safety issues. Los Angeles, responding to a threat, kept 640,000 children out of schools on Dec. 15. New York City, receiving a similar threat, decided it was a hoax and kept schools open.

Immigration has percolated to the top of public issues since the arrival of tens of thousands of newcomers appears to present a security threat. Checking the "papers" of the arrivals is problematic since many are coming from countries where paperwork is either non-existent or can be forged.

The main trends that we saw in 2015 include the continued decline of the influence of mainstream media due to tightened ad budgets and numerous free information/news sources; corporate "PR" departments that are under control of legal, marketing and financial, and continued growth in the agency side of PR where about a dozen specialized areas like healthcare, tech and financial are growing. *O'Dwyer's* magazine, focusing on such practices, published 692 pages in 2015 that included hundreds of profiles of the practices and trends in those practice areas.

Eighteen of the 25 largest O'Dwyer-ranked PR firms had double-digit growth in 2014 and indications are that this trend has continued in 2015. Companies have mostly shifted press relations to outside counsel. Queries put in "question boxes" on corporate websites generate replies from PR firms.

Readers can search stories on [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com) by 49 topics from beauty/fashion and book reviews to travel PR and Wikipedia by accessing the section "Look up O'Dwyer stories by category" at the top of the site.

"Good-Bye to Hello" headlined an article in the April 2015 *Vanity Fair* that said people rarely talk on the phone any more, relying instead on texting.

PR is growing as mainstream media decline because technology allows companies and institutions to contact customers and potential customers directly via emails, corporate websites, digitized company publications and social media.

More media are carrying corporate-generated editorial-type copy as "native advertising." Agencies are becoming more skilled at creating "stories" that contain client messages.

### 2015 Generated Shocks, Major Stories

There were many major, even shocking developments in the PR/media arena.

--Biggest story in the services sector was the De-

cember purchase for \$841 million of UBM's PR Newswire by Cision, owned by private equity firm GTCR. Also under the same ownership are Vocus and Gorkana. Cision, headed by Peter Granat, adds a legacy news dissemination service to its tech-based offerings

which include low-cost PRWeb, "World's No. 1 news release service."

--The sale of *Newsday*, Cablevision and news12.com to French-owned Altice for \$17.7 billion was a shock to those in Eastern Long Island where we have spent half the year for 30 years. Local media are weak enough without being under foreign ownership. Certain stories are skipped because they are "politically incorrect."

--The dismissal of PRSA VP-PR Stephanie Cegielski when she came for work on Monday, July 27 was a shock. She had been there three years and was

promoted to VP after the sudden death of Arthur Yann on July 13, 2013.

We think she has a case vs. the Society because she got the duties of Yann but only about half his pay of \$191k. What did she do that was wrong? The Society is now searching for a VP-PR.

--The \$127K in bonuses PRSA CEO Bill Murray received for 2013-2014 was a shock because 2014 Society revenues of \$11.1M were lower than the \$11.4M in revenues in 2006, the year before he came. The Society withheld this info from us until Nov. 25, ten days after the legal deadline for providing IRS Form 990 to requesters. Auditors had the info back in April when the audit was published.

--Another shock from the belated 990 was that staff CPA Philip Bonaventura got a 13.7% raise to a total of \$286,635. Base went to \$232,773 from \$212,291. Joining the list of the top seven paid staffers was controller Wai Chung who had total pay of \$158,354.

Members are paying \$444,989 for substandard, misleading accounting that delays publication of the 990 until the last possible moment and withholding it from the Assembly and press. The Society, legally but in violation of accepted norms, counts dues income as cash when it should be booked over the course of a year. This inflates "net assets."

Also a shock from the Society's 990 is \$63,225 in legal expenses, bringing the ten-year total to \$710,058 or an average of \$71,000 yearly. Venable of Washington, D.C., is the Society's counsel.

Staff accountants, administrators and lawyers are well paid at the Society while PR is short-changed. Cegielski, with three years experience, was let go in July with no explanation nor any announcement by the Society.

--Thomas Delaney, a graduate of *The Gallagher Report*, Madison avenue's feisty investigative NL that folded in 1989, shocked us by suing Meredith Corp. (*Better Homes & Gardens*) Dec. 16 on charges of copyright violation of *The Delaney Report*, a weekly NL based in Tryon, N.C.

(Continued on page 8)



## REVIEW OF 2015 (Cont'd)

The 15-page suit, filed in New York's U.S. District Court, recalls copyright charges against PRSA made by 12 authors in 1994 but never brought to court. Crain's, New York Times, Prentice-Hall, Wylie and other major publishers whose works were copied and sold refused to join the authors in a legal action. Going up against the Society on their own was far beyond the authors' means.

A pleasant shock came from attending Fair Media Council's annual "Connection Day" Oct. 23 at Briarcliffe College, Bethpage, L.I. Attendance of 500+ included more than 50 reporters and editors, many from major New York City media such as NBC, CBS and Fox News. PR pros and media figures heard 100 speakers and rubbed elbows in a friendly atmosphere such as used to be the case in New York. FMC CEO Jaci Clement said the day "once again proved that PR people and reporters want to build personal relationships."

Another L.I. group that welcomes media is PR Professionals of Long Island, a 150-member group headed by Kali Chan, director of media relations, Adelphi University. The group was the L.I. chapter of PRSA until it broke away in 1989. "We did not get enough from national to be worth the \$175 dues," said Gene Seraphine, chapter president. PRPLI has a full schedule of activities.

A shock not only to us but journalism is the flow of reporters to the PR side. Gawker reporter Gabrielle Bluestone found two Pulitzer Prize winners who had gone to PR—Rob Kuznia of the *Daily Breeze*, Torrance, Calif., joining the USC Shoah Foundation, and Natalie Caula Hauff of the *Post and Courier*, Charleston, S.C., to media relations at the county government.

Six journalists who went to PR were interviewed by *New York Observer* reporters Michael Kaminer and John Bonazzo who asked what it was like to be in PR. All were positive about their new jobs, stressing the creativity required and better working conditions. Among those interviewed were Deborah Solomon, ex-*Wall Street Journal* and Pulitzer Prize winner now with Finsbury; William Goss, ex-*NY Times* real estate editor now at Rubenstein Assocs.; and Joe Checkler, ex-WSJ, now at Peppercomm. Kristin Boehm, who went from people.com to DKC, said her biggest surprise was "eating lunch. At a restaurant! It's lovely."

Gorkana, a subsidiary of Cision, has a regular feature on journalists switching to PR called "Moving to the Dark Side."

Michael Kinsley, writing in the May 2014 *Vanity Fair* on the decline of news jobs, described a "content farm" in Maryland as "dozens of recent college grads—paid 75 cents an hour—who sat chained to their computers grinding out blog items while editors stood above them with whips, shouting 'Blog, you worthless scum.'" He admits this was an exaggeration but likens the "farm" to the 19th century factories that minimized labor costs. Bloomberg in September cut 90 editorial staffers in New York, Washington, D.C., and overseas.

A shock was the NYT ditching the advertising, bridge and chess columns. *Variety* doubted the ad col-

umn, a staple since 1935, would come back after Stuart Elliott's departure after a 23-year run. It was right. This reporter wrote a daily ad column for eight years for the *New York Journal-American* and *Chicago Tribune* and found that some big Madison Ave. players did not like daily attention paid to the vicissitudes of the industry.

The bridge column "took too much time because the day's game had to be played to check it out," said NYT in dropping a fixture of the paper for 80 years. The chess column had run for 52 years.

### IPR Compromises Its Mission

A shock was the appointment of Prof. Tina McCorkindale of Appalachian State University as CEO of the Institute for PR. This turned the clock back on IPR's 26-year quest to be independent of PR Society of America. McCorkindale, a director of the Society-controlled Universal Accreditation Board, chaired its Educators Academy in 2013. IPR broke away from PRSA in 1989 because it rejected demands that all directors be APR. The Society then started another non-profit Foundation. Neither has gone far in 26 years. Foundation income was \$250,526 in 2013 and IPR brought in \$674,012 in 2014 not counting donations of service.

We were shocked at the Westhampton Beach trustees' meeting Sept. 3 when a lawyer for the trustees kept shouting at us, "Address the board, address the board" when our eyes veered to the residents in the room or the camera that was recording the event. We had been limited to five minutes of speaking when we wanted to rebut a lawyer for the board who had been allowed to speak for 45 minutes. The trustees had refused to put us on the agenda which would have allowed more than five minutes. So much for free speech in WHB.

The Westhampton Library board got a shock when 65 residents showed up at its Oct. 30 meeting with most of them demanding the resignation of library president Joan Levan, which they got. Three of the four other trustees also resigned. Residents want an elected board for the first time since the library's founding in 1896. A union was formed for the first time on Aug. 21 by a 31-3 vote.

### Final Release for PR Notables

More than 40 PR and media figures died in 2015, their obits carried on [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com).

They include, in alphabetical order, Alan Caruba, 77, New Jersey counselor and blogger; Gordon Conley, 92, JWT veteran; Al Croft, 87, author and adviser to PR firms; Jay DeBow, 81, New York counselor; Jack Felton, 84, PRSA, Institute for PR leader; Larry Foster, 88, Johnson & Johnson; George Goodwin, Atlanta counselor; Bob Gray, adviser to President Reagan, D.C. counselor; Bernie Ilson, New York; Ted Levine, 88, founder of DCI, New York; Joe Mansi, 77, partner in KCSA; Edward Ney, Young & Rubicam; Wes Pedersen, D.C. counselor; Dan Roher, 88, New York counselor; Leonard Saffir, Porter Novelli; Ernie Sando, 64, Georgeson & Co.; and Charlotte Kelly Veal, 83, Hearst PR.

— Jack O'Dwyer