



Kevin McCauley
Editor-in-Chief

O'Dwyer's

The Inside News of PR & Marketing Communications



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

June 7, 2021 Vol. 54 No. 23

EMPIRE STATE SEEKS PR SHINE FOR APPLES

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets is seeking proposals from firms that can provide marketing services on behalf of the department's Apple Marketing Order, the program that represents New York's apple-growing industry.

The AMO needs a firm to identify emerging market opportunities, implement marketing strategies and develop promotional initiatives to increase the sale and consumption of New York apples.

Agencies interested in submitting proposals must first submit a Letter of Interest to the AMO Advisory Board that outlines proposed strategies, details the firm's qualifications, describes the expected outcomes of the project(s) and proposes a budget to accomplish these activities.

Letters of Interest are due by June 17 and should be sent via email to procurement.Info@agriculture.ny.gov with the words "Apple Marketing Order" in the subject line and the Letter of Interest attached.

Questions should be directed to William Shattuck, manager of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' Agricultural Producers Security Program, william.shattuck@agriculture.ny.gov or 518/485-7306.

[View the RFP \(link\).](#)

CLARITY PR'S SARFATY SHIFTS TO RALLY POINT

Ruth Sarfaty, who previously led the New York office of Clarity PR, is coming on board at Rally Point Public Relations as managing director, global technology and media.

At Clarity, she was also head of client services for North America. Before that, she was New York managing director at Sparkpr and executive VP, head of media strategies at MWWPR.



Ruth Sarfaty

Sarfaty joins the agency as it works to broaden its B2B client base from fintech, digital assets and financial services to include such areas as media, marketing & advertising, thought leadership and crisis leadership.

"I spent the last decade working with dynamic, high growth companies and look forward to bringing all I know to Rally Point," she said.

Rally Point has also brought on Monica Van Horn as managing director, global fintech and crypto/digital assets. Van Horn comes to the agency from Forefront Communications, where she was senior vice president.

DENTONS LAUNCHES STRATCOMM BIZ

Ed Reilly, who stepped down as [FTI Consulting Group's](#) strategic communications unit in December 2017 after a seven-year run, is CEO of Dentons Global Advisors, which was launched June 2 by the world's biggest law firm, Dentons.

DGA, which has 11 principals, is chaired by former secretary of state Madeleine Albright. Her Albright Stonebridge Group is a founding member of DGA.

DGA services include capital markets/transaction geopolitical risk advisory, crisis/issues management, corporate positioning, commercial diplomacy and dispute resolution.

DGA is independent of Dentons, though the law firm will be a minority shareholder.



Ed Reilly

GCI CHOOSES PETIGROW FOR CGO POST

GCI Health has named Eleanor Petigrow global chief growth officer. Petigrow was previously managing director, new business at Syneos Health Communications. At GCI, she is tasked with driving marketing and thought leadership strategy, developing customized insights for leaders and clients, and working with the agency's learning & development team, reporting to global CEO Kristin Cahill.

"In this newly created role, Eleanor will be a critical steward of GCI Health's rapid, continued growth around the world," said Cahill.



Eleanor Petigrow

RUSSIAN GOLD MINER PICKS POWERSCOURT

Powerscourt is guiding Russian gold mine operator Nordgold as it seeks a listing on the London Stock Exchange.

The pure-play gold producer, which also seeks a listing on the Moscow Exchange, hopes to be included in London's FTSE 100 blue chip index.

Nordgold runs mines in Russia, Kazakhstan, Burkina Faso and Guinea. It also has an interest in a project in Canada.

The *Wall Street Journal* estimates the value of Nordgold's IPO in the \$5B range. It says Nordgold's IPO takes advantage of rising commodity prices and the fear of inflation.

Powerscourt's Peter Ogden and Jack Holden handle Nordgold.

AMERICANS CAN'T SPOT FAKE NEWS

Americans who are the most confident in their ability to spot “fake news” online are the most likely to fall for it, according to a [recent study](#) published in peer-reviewed scientific journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

The study, which focused on Americans’ ability to recognize misinformation and disinformation online, quizzed respondents’ competency in distinguishing between fake and actual news headlines. It found that many Americans appear to overestimate their abilities in telling the difference between legitimate and false news, and this overconfidence may be at least partially responsible for why individuals are vulnerable to the phenomenon—and worse, why they share fake news.

The study found that most participants overestimate their abilities in identifying fake news content: while 90 percent of respondents claimed to possess above-average abilities in differentiating false from real news content, a whopping 75 percent fell short in their performance.

On average, respondents placed themselves 22 percentage points higher than their actual score. About one in five (20 percent) rated themselves 50 percentage points or higher than their score.

The study’s authors referred to the idea of fake news being a problem that individuals aren’t personally vulnerable to as a “classic example of the third-person effect,” or the belief that mass media messages have a greater influence on others than on themselves. This overconfidence could make individuals more susceptible to exposing themselves to fake news and to accept it as fact, especially when those stories comport with their own political beliefs.

Respondents for the study, “The Perils of Overconfidence” were drawn from two nationally-representative samples of nearly 8,300 people selected by YouGov’s matching and weighting algorithm to approximate the demographic and political attributes of the U.S. population.

PNAS is the official journal of the National Academy of Sciences.

UNC NEEDS PR FOR \$4.3B FUND-RAISING PUSH

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is seeking a partner to provide on-call marketing communications services to assist its fund-raising push.



UNC is entering the final phase of its \$4.25B “Campaign for Carolina” development drive.

It feels the need “to be able to quickly scale-up, on-demand as we seek to meet our commitment to excellence in support of the University’s schools, units, centers and institutes,” according to the RFP.

The Development Office anticipates an increased demand for marketing and communications projects tied to private giving.

The ideal partner will have a proven track record of success and expertise in the higher education development marketing space.

Proposals are due June 11 at North Carolina’s [interactive purchasing system portal](#).

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

NEWS OF FIRMS

Geben Communication acquires **Women Online**, a content and influencer marketing agency that specializes in national social impact and nonprofit clients. Women Online founder Morra Aarons-Mele is joining Geben’s leadership team as executive vice president and will lead the development of a national social impact practice. “The Women Online team has a rich history of successfully implementing creative, innovative campaigns that shift behaviors, engage stakeholders, and educate audiences,” said Geben founder and president Heather Whaling.



Weber Shandwick Ireland rebrands as **Káno Communications** following the agency’s management buyout by managing director Siobhan Molloy last September. Káno remains Irish partner to the Weber Shandwick network. Co-founded over 30 years ago as Financial & Corporate Communications by Eileen Gleeson and Mary McCarthy, the business became part of Weber Shandwick in 2000. Molloy joined the agency in a senior role in 1997 from Carr Communications before becoming managing director in 2004.

Wunderlich Kaplan Communications is now accepting cryptocurrency as a form of client payment. The Museum of Graffiti and Grow.House, a decentralized cannabis NFT game, are the first two WKC clients to pay in crypto. In addition to selectively accepting cryptocurrency as payments, the agency says it will continue to work in the cryptocurrency space with chosen clients. “Clients have begun to ask to pay in the form and we have realized, we need to evolve with the nature of our clients,” WKC president and founder Dara Kaplan.

PRCG | Sports launches SportsRep360, an integrated suite of reputation management practices, training principles and technology designed specifically for athletes. SportsRep360’s offerings include: brand counseling and strategies; media and social media monitoring and analysis; message and media training; advance search engine optimization; and a tailored program of social media posts for such platforms as Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok.

The Public Relations Global Network adds **Peritus PR** and **Race Communications** as members, bringing its number of offices throughout the world to 54. Peritus is a woman-owned business, based in Birmingham, AL, which supports issue-based campaigns, statewide policy initiatives, influential nonprofits, ballot initiatives and some of Alabama’s largest employers. Race Communications, which has offices in Goiás, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, targets the Brazilian market in the fields of finance, food and beverages, and logistics and transport.



Icon Source, a digital marketplace that connects brands with athletes, closes a \$1.6 million seed round that will support its expansion as it prepares to begin facilitating deals for college athletes on July 1. The company’s mobile application and AI-powered platform pairs athletes and brands based on social audience demographics, as well as the ability to run organic searches based on schedule, demographics, sports and personal interests. “There’s a tremendous market out there for brands to connect with athletes seamlessly and affordably,” said Icon Source founder and CEO Chase Garrett.

MISSES, HITS AND OPTIMISM

In the June 2020 issue of *O'Dwyer's*, my colleagues at Padilla and I laid out six predictions that we believed would come to bear once we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. We thought we would see how we did roughly one year later.

First, let's acknowledge where we missed:

Our predictions were written and submitted before George Floyd was killed by police—and before the nation experienced subsequent protests, violence and destruction. These events sparked a widespread evaluation and acceleration of DE&I commitments and actions that we hope will continue.

We had a presidential election with allegations of fraud, a sitting president unwilling to concede and an unprecedented attack on the Capitol. The wave of attempted state-level election reforms—most based on unfounded claims—has resulted in corporate leaders speaking out against voter suppression, which affirms that companies who had normally tried to remain under the radar now are being compelled to make their opinions known to employees, customers, investors and communities.



Matt Kucharski

And this damn pandemic. Here we are well into 2021 and while there's light at the end of the tunnel and many have gotten at least that first jab, the fatigue is reaching its limits.

Let's look at where we hit the mark and what's next for brands and communicators.

New stakes for engagement and culture

The Prediction: Smart businesses would use the stress of the past year to anticipate and adjust to what kind of employees they wanted to be over the long term.

The Evidence: A recent article in *Becker's Hospital Review* highlighted how health systems are using employee feedback to bounce back from the pandemic and using the strategic communications tools they created during COVID-19.

Reinventing the customer experience

The Prediction: Innovations introduced during COVID-19 to prevent lost revenue, including re-imagining of digital experiences, would not revert after the pandemic.

The Evidence: OKCupid leveraged customer feedback to incorporate a new feature related to finding a date who is passionate about climate change. For many companies, the pandemic ushered in changes to the customer experience that they've wanted to implement for years.

Fighting anxiety with clarity, transparency

The Prediction: Companies requiring financial communications will need to be more diligent about communicating at key inflection points.

The Evidence: More than 60 leading public companies have signed on to support the World Economic Forum's Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics.

The rise of legal disputes

The Prediction: Lawsuits challenging how businesses and government entities respond to re-opening would require legal and communications departments to stay in lockstep.

The Evidence: Next to PR professionals, some of the busiest people during this pandemic have been in the legal profession. There's a cottage industry of lawyers writing—and challenging—employee and customer liability waivers.

Community relations gains relevance

The Prediction: Corporate community relations will shift

toward addressing inequities in food, health, education and other basic needs. The pandemic and the death of George Floyd exposed gaps in these systems.

The Evidence: Examples exist across the board in every state and in every industry. A coalition of 35 Minnesota-based companies pooled resources to deliver \$2.35 million in grants to address the state's digital divide, and the University of Minnesota launched a \$5 million anti-racism health equity research program with funding from Padilla client Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.

What's next?

The challenge for communicators is to hold onto the strategic seat at the table they earned by being essential to their company's success during the pandemic. We're seeing communicators rise to the occasion and engage more strategically and more meaningfully with the C-Suite, which is a positive outcome after an incredibly challenging 18 months.

Matt Kucharski is President of Padilla, based in Minneapolis with six offices across the U.S. Padilla is part of the AVENIR GLOBAL network of agencies.

CO ENERGY PROGRAM POSTS MARKETING RFP

The Colorado Low-income Energy Assistance Program, a federally funded, state-supervised program that provides needs an agency that can develop and execute a marketing, branding and advertising strategy.

Scope of the work includes developing a LEAP marketing strategy and strategic media plan, drafting media communications briefs, designing and producing promotional materials, developing and executing social media marketing programs, designing digital display ads, media buying and research and analytics work.

Terms of the contract are slated to run from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022, with the possibility of renewal for four additional one-year periods.

Proposals are due by 4 p.m. (MT) on June 14 and shall be emailed to: TE_RFP_yt9eevn75hty4bg7@u.box.com

Bidding agencies should submit a zip folder containing all proposal submission documents.

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



SVC, ICR TAKE UK'S BABYLON PUBLIC

[Sard Verbinen & Co.](#) and ICR Westwicke, handle Babylon as the London-based digital health company goes public in a SPAC deal valued at \$4.2B.

Its stock will trade on the NASDAQ.

The *Financial Times* noted that Babylon is the latest UK company to spurn a listing on the London Stock Exchange.

Babylon, which is expected to generate \$300M revenues this year, provides digital self-care tools to more than 24M people in Europe, US, Canada, Africa and 13 countries in Asia.

Palantir, the US data company that does extensive work in the national defense and security sector, is a strategic investor in Babylon.

Britain's National Health Services hired Palantir last year to develop a COVID-19 "data store" to manage the distribution of PPE to healthcare facilities.

Sard Verbinen's Danya Al-Qattan handles media, while ICR Westwicke's Bob East deals with investors inquiring about Babylon's SPAC deal.

BGR REPS SYRIAN INSTITUTE FOR PROGRESS

BGR Government Affairs has signed on as DC representative for the Syrian Institute for Progress.

Founded in 2012, the California-based non-profit is working to promote the civil and human rights of all people living in Syria as the civil uprising against Bashar Assad has entered its 11th year.

BGR

President Biden, who ordered air-strikes in February against Iran-backed militias in Syria, is reviewing US policy regarding the war-torn country.

There are 900 American troops in Syria, supporting Kurdish fighters and keeping the country's oil from Assad.

BGR's Lester Munson, who worked as deputy assistant administrator for the US Agency for International Development during the Bush II administration, and Mark Tavlarides, director of legislative affairs at the National Security Council in the Clinton White House, handle the SIP account.

SFOX SEEKS MARKETING AOR

The San Francisco Open Exchange, a U.S. cryptocurrency broker that provides trading and digital asset management for traders, investors, exchanges, money managers, banks and payment companies, is seeking proposals from marketing agencies in an effort to boost its brand awareness.

Deliverables include driving organic web traffic and UVM growth, conducting an email marketing and lead gen campaign, producing creative material, developing a paid media strategy, website enhancements and messaging, media relations and developing earned media opportunities, search engine optimization, social media management, building an email list and general account management.

Budget allocated for the work is between \$10,000 and \$20,000 per month.

Proposals are due by June 11 and should be emailed to Global Head of Brand and Marketing Martin Morse at mmorse@sfox.com with the subject line "RFP Marketing Services." Questions should also be emailed to Morse.

[Read the RFP \(link\).](#)

BALLARD DELIVERS FOR DOORDASH

Ballard Partners has picked up Doordash, the food delivery service that hasn't chalked up a profitable year in its eight years of operation.



The San Francisco company's red ink flow is expected to continue in 2021 as it posted an \$11M loss in Q1 despite a 198 percent surge in revenue to \$1.1B compared to the pandemic-impacted year-ago period.

Doordash co-founder Tony Xu and CFO Prabir Adarkar took a pessimistic note in their letter to shareholders, saying the successful rollout of COVID-19 vaccines is expected to increase in-restaurant dining rates, dealing a blow to Doordash's food delivery business.

The company has diversified from food by stepping up delivery of alcohol, groceries, flowers, gifts, pet supplies and convenience store items.

Ballard Partners provides DC representation for Doordash in the areas of labor issues, consumer and general business matters. Brian Ballard heads the three-member team that includes Syl Lukis and Eugene O'Flaherty.

ON THE MOVE

BCW brings on **Beth Marrano** as executive vice president, integrated client solutions and **Gabriela Lechin** as executive vice president, West Coast market leader. Marrano comes to BCW from Publicis, where she served as executive vice president, client lead and head of account management. She will head up BCW's Key Client Partner (KCP) program, with specific focus on bringing earned-plus solutions to several of BCW's marquee clients. Before joining BCW, Lechin was chief communications officer with Birmingham Technologies. She previously was a senior vice president at Global Results Communications. In her new post, she is responsible for deepening BCW's earned-plus offering and leading talent and clients.

Ogilvy UK names **Fiona Gordon** chief executive officer. Gordon was previously Ogilvy's chief client officer EMEA. Before that, she was the WPP UK team lead for Walgreens Boots Alliance. She has also served as Ogilvy UK's group transformation director and group chairperson of Ogilvy Singapore. In addition, Gordon sits on the advisory board of WPP Stella (WPP's Women's Network).



Fiona Gordon

Activate Health hires **Sandi Sonnenfeld** as director of public relations. Sonnenfeld has worked in a freelance, in-house or agency capacity with healthcare and life sciences companies including Teladoc Health, a virtual care network; Health Quest, a healthcare and hospital system provider in New York's Mid-Hudson Valley; Pfizer; Novartis and GSK.

Haley Marketing, a website development, content and recruitment marketing firm, brings on **Jeffrey Staats** as chief marketing officer and **Susan Wurst** as director of account management. Staats most recently served as head of marketing at staffing and recruiting firm TalentLaunch. In his new role, he is tasked with solidifying Haley's go-to-market strategies as well as leveraging his extensive marketing automation experience in a new service line for the firm. Before coming to Haley, Wurst started the account management function at TempWorks Software. She will be working with both clients and Haley Marketing team members to ensure a cohesive partnership across all product and service offerings.

CGS, a provider of business applications, enterprise learning and outsourcing services, names **Mark Tullio** vice president and chief marketing officer. Tullio has served as director, marketing & digital strategy at Booz Allen Hamilton; vice president, global marketing at computer networking company Lantronix; and vice president of marketing at Kaplan. He will lead the CGS global marketing team.

LaVoieHealthScience promotes **Harriet Ullman** to VP, PR & product communications.

Ullman joined LHS in 2019 as a senior consultant. Before that, she was VP in the healthcare practice at Ogilvy PR/Feinstein Kean Healthcare. The agency has also brought on **Kristi Bruno** as VP PR/communications & lead, digital marketing practice, midwest region, a new role at the agency. Bruno comes to LHS from civil engineering company Omega & Associates, where she was associate vice president.



Harriet Ullman

FTI POWERS APEX CLEAN ENERGY'S PA PUSH

FTI Government Affairs has signed on with Apex Clean Energy, representing the Charlottesville, VA company on energy, environmental and tax matters.

Apex develops, builds and operates utility-scale wind and solar power facilities across the US.



The company last month completed the sale of the Isabella Wind I and II projects to Michigan's DTE Energy. The facility is the largest renewable energy producer in the Wolverine State.

It also provides wind power to McDonald's outlets and Facebook facilities.

Bryan Zumwalt, senior managing director and head of FTI's government affairs group, heads the four-member lobbying team.

He was executive VP-PA at the Consumer Brands Assn. (the former Grocery Manufacturers of America) and VP-federal affairs at the American Chemistry Council, prior to joining FTI in February.

ST. LOUIS CC SEEKS TO ENROLL PR PARTNER

St. Louis Community College has issued a \$500K marketing communications RFP for a campaign to bolster its reputation and increase enrollment.

According to the RFP, STLCC has suffered a decline in enrollment and retention due to a negative perception, greater competition due to an increase in post-secondary educational options and a skimpy investment for marketing.

STLCC's four campuses represent an economic impact of more than \$2.5B. The college has awarded 14,700 degrees and certificates during the past seven years in programs such as allied health, business administration, information systems, life sciences, engineering and technology-related areas.

The school is looking for a firm or firms to handle marketing research & consumer insights; strategic marketing planning/campaign creation; graphic design; writing; and website services. It will accept bids for the entire, or parts of, the communications package.

Proposals, due June 11, go to <https://stlcc.bonfirehub.com>. [Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

JEWBELONG TARGETS ANTISEMITISM

JewBelong.com, a non-profit online resource founded by former Manhattan Mini Storage chief branding officer Archie Gottesman and Starch Branding co-founder Stacy Stuart,



has launched an awareness campaign targeting the rise of antisemitism in the US and around the world. "JewBelong or JewBeGone" has kicked off with 750 tongue-in-cheek digital ads running across Manhattan that read, "Here's an idea: Let's ask everyone who's wondering if antisemitism is real to wear a yarmulke for a week and then report back."

The campaign will run through at least July, beginning with LINK digital ads, and then adding billboards and print posters in high-traffic locations such as PATH Trains and Times Square. JewBelong has also announced the Jewish Partisan Prize to recognize influencers who are standing up against antisemitism on Instagram and other social media platforms.

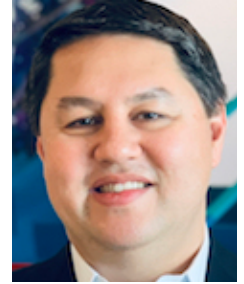
SOCIAL MEDIA VET WEXLER TO SEVEN LETTER

Nu Wexler, who held policy communications jobs at Google, Facebook and Twitter, has joined Seven Letter strategic PR shop. He has extensive experience in privacy, cybersecurity, disinformation, copyright and child safety issues.

Prior to joining the tech giants, Wexler worked on Capitol Hill. He served the House Budget, House Education and Labor Committees and was a staffer for Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and former Senator "Fritz" Hollings (D-SC).

He also served as communications director for Wal-Mart Watch and did a stint at Ogilvy.

At Seven Letter, Wexler will focus on healthcare, national security and voter access matters.



Nu Wexler

BRUNSWICK GROUP SUPPORTS SPRINKLR IPO

Brunswick Group is handling New York-based Sprinklr, which bills itself as "the unified customer experience management platform for modern enterprises."

Sprinklr's software enables customer-facing functions across the front office, from customer care to marketing collaboration across internal silos and digital channels to deliver more "human" customer experiences at scale.

The company, which posted a \$41M loss on \$387M revenues for the fiscal year ended Jan. 31, says it "empowers the world's largest and most loved brands to make their customers happier."

Sprinklr plans to list its shares on the Big Board.

Brunswick Group has Darren McDermott and Paul Cafiero working the Sprinklr business.



EVENTS

The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations at the University of Alabama is sponsoring a [June 9 Facebook Live conversation](#) that will discuss the results of the 2020-2021 North American Communication Monitor, a study focusing on the key trends and challenges that face the communications profession. The researchers behind the NACM, which include Plank Center director Karla Gower, will share their insights on the study's results at the 10 a.m. (CDT) event.

PRSA-NY is holding a [virtual summit](#) dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion in public relations June 16-17. "Driving DEI Forward in PR Campaigns, Workplaces, and Beyond" coincides with Juneteenth (June 19) and LGBTQ Pride month. PRSA-NY Board Members and external presenters will share best practices for growing DEI in public relations workplaces as well as in external campaigns.

The Hispanic Public Relations Association is accepting entries for the 2021 HPRNA National ¡BRAVO! Awards, which recognize achievements in 24 categories, including technology, healthcare/nutrition, COVID response, social injustice and social media, as well as campaign of the year, in-house team of the year and agency of the year. [Deadline for submissions](#) is July 9. The winner will be announced on Sept. 15 during the HPRNA ¡BRAVO! Awards "Powered by Unity & Purpose" Dinner.

COMMENTARY



It is time for Joe Biden to fish or cut bait. The president can either pursue the unreachable goal of bipartisanship with recalcitrant Republicans, who have zippo intent of giving the Democrat a legislative victory, or take command of his bold agenda.

In negotiating with Republicans, Biden looks like Charlie Brown attempting to kick the football, when Lucy yanks the ball away at the last moment and Charlie winds up flat on his back.

Dust yourself off, Joe. This is no time for Peanuts and the gang.

Time is running short because America's democracy is at stake, according to a "statement of concern" signed by more than 165 historians, scholars and academics, as of June 3.

Released June 1, the document is called "The Threats to American Democracy and the Need for National Voting and Election Administration Standards."

From the Letter: "Elected Republican leaders have had numerous opportunities to repudiate Trump and his 'Stop the Steal' crusade, which led to the violent attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6. Each time, they have sidestepped the truth and enabled the lie to spread."

Meanwhile, Biden may cave to Republican demands not to overturn the Trump tax cuts, in exchange for their support for a watered-down deal on infrastructure.

Time to show some spine, Joe.

How screwed up is the US? A Public Religion Research Institute and Interfaith Youth Corp Core survey released May 27 gives an indication of how nuts we really are.

It found that 15 percent of Americans agree with the QAnon conspiracy theory that "the government, media and financial worlds in the US are controlled by a group of Satan-worshipping pedophiles who run a global sex trafficking operation."

Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of Republicans buy into that garbage, along with 14 percent of Independents and eight percent of Democrats.

And here's another tidbit from Crazytown.

Nearly half (48 percent) of Newsmax/OANN fans and 34 percent of Fox News watchers agree that: "There is a storm coming soon that will sweep away the elite in power and restore the rightful leaders."

Do they have Jesus or Donald Trump in mind? My guess is that Trump has the edge.

To paraphrase Captain Renault, who was shocked to find that gambling was going on in Rick's Cafe Americain in the film "Casablanca": "I am shocked to find out that more than 60 percent of Nestle's food portfolio is unhealthy."

The world's largest food company is the proud marketer of nutritional gems such as Hot Pockets sandwiches; Stouffer's frozen foods; KitKat, Smarties, Nestle Crunch, Milkybar candies; Nesquik syrups/drinks, and Coffee-mate. [Full Disclosure: I loved Nestle Crunch bars as a kid.]

One actually could be shocked that 37 percent of Nestle's food and beverage revenues meet the "recognized definition of health" standards under Australia's food rating system.

A Nestle internal document reports that a 14 gram serving of strawberry-flavored Nesquik contained a whopping 14 grams of sugar, while a three-meat DiGiorno croissant crust pizza is packed with 40 percent of a person's recommended daily allowance of sodium.

Nestle admits some of its junk foods "will never be 'healthy' no matter how much we renovate."

That may be why the company agreed on April 30 to shell out \$5.8B for The Bountiful Co., the pride of Ronkonkoma, NY, a leader in the global nutrition and supplemental category.

Meanwhile, Nestle CEO Mark Schneider should think about junking the company's slogan of "Good Food. Good Life."

Trump bails out from the wild and woolly world of blogging, not from jail. The former president has shut down his blog. "From the Desk of Donald J. Trump" lasted a pitance, 29 days. The world is a saner place.

The former tweeter-in-chief pulled the plug on the blog because he was infuriated by its measly readership, according to the *Washington Post*.

The 88M cultists who followed Trump on Twitter failed to migrate to the blog, billed as "a beacon of freedom."

Trump's blog attracted fewer visitors than Petfinder, pet adoption service and Delish, recipes site. That's an embarrassing setback for the super-egoist.

But don't worry, Team Trump is working on another platform. The MAGA crowd waits with bated breath.

Investors in AMC Entertainment, which is riding the meme stock rollercoaster, may lose their shirts but at least they will get a free large popcorn out of the deal.

The stock doubled and closed at \$66.25 on June 2 after CEO Adam Aron offered his company's "extraordinary base of enthusiastic and passionate individual investors" the AMC Investor Connect communications platform. Aron will communicate directly with AMC Investor Connect participants, invite them to special screenings, and serve them a free large popcorn when they take in a movie this summer.

While AMC woos retail investors, it told the Securities and Exchange Commission that many of the rubes are going to be taken to the cleaners.

The company's prospectus warns that stock buyers may "incur substantial losses" due to the crazy volatility of the shares. It notes that AMC shares traded as low as \$1.91 on Jan. 5 and touched a high of \$72.62 on June 2.

The company admits trading in its shares is a crapshoot.

"We believe that the recent volatility and our current market prices reflect market and trading dynamics unrelated to our underlying business, or macro or industry fundamentals, and we do not know how long these dynamics will last," says its SEC filing.

Suckers beware, but enjoy the popcorn. Ask for some extra butter for the popcorn; that's the least you deserve.

—Kevin McCauley