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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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March 17, 2014 Vol. 47 No. 11

PRSA CEO TO HELM NAT'L COFFEE ASSN.

Bill Murray, who is stepping down as CEO of PR Society of America, will helm the New York-based National Coffee Association starting June 1.

The New York-based trade group, which includes growers, roasters, retailers and other segments of the coffee industry, said Murray will take the role of president and CEO.

NCA president/CEO Robert Nelson resigned in January after nearly two decades. Dub Hay, a senior VP at Starbucks, is leading the group on an interim basis.

NCA chair John Boyle, COO of Massimo Zanetti Beverage USA, said the group found in Murray a leader with "passion, vision and the credentials to take the NCA to a future even brighter than its past."

NCA director of external relations Joseph DeRupo is a former associate director of PR for PRSA.

PRSA announced Murray's exit on March 7. He steps down after a seven-year term. Murray was previously co-COO of the MPAA.

"I am excited by the opportunity to guide a dynamic trade association serving the iconic U.S. coffee industry at an important juncture in its honored history," Murray said in a statement.

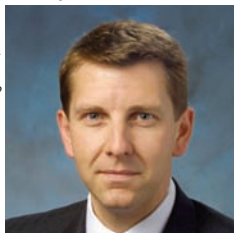
NCA members include Nestle USA, Dunkin Brands, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Starbucks, JM Smucker and Kraft Foods, among others.

TESLA STEERS COMMS TO SPROULE

Simon Sproule, who led global marketing communications for Nissan Motors in Japan, has moved to Silicon Valley-based electric carmaker Tesla Motors as VP of communications and marketing.

Former Tesla VP/comms. Ricardo Reyes left Tesla for Square in 2012.

The appointment comes as Tesla and its high-profile CEO, Elon Musk, square off against states that are blocking its direct-sales model. New Jersey last week effectively banned Tesla from selling cars directly to buyers.



Sproule

Sproule was director of communications for Renault-Nissan – the top electric car seller -- and held various VP posts at Nissan in the U.S. and Japan and for Jaguar Land Rover in Irvine, Calif. He also did a stint as a VP of communications for Microsoft and as comms. manager for Ford in the U.K.

Obama alum Liz Jarvis-Shean joined Tesla as director of global communications last year.

CHEVRON MOTORS TO LEVICK

Chevron USA is now at Levick, which took over the bulk of Dow Lohnes Government Strategies in January.

The D.C. firm handles hot button issues such as fracking, oil spills, oil/gas development, Clean Act rulings, ethanol, trade policy, refinery regulation and gasoline pricing.

Rick Kessler, former DLGS president and chief of staff to powerful but retiring Congressman John Dingell (D-Mich.), works the Chevron account with Michael Scrivner, ex-chief of staff to Congressman Norm Lent (R-N.Y.), and Peter Leon, former legislative director for Rep. Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.).

Chevron spent \$360K during 2013 at DLGS.

Parent company is currently celebrating the legal victory in the long-running legal squabble over pollution in Ecuador.

A U.S. federal judge this month tossed a \$9.5B verdict against Chevron that was granted by an Ecuadoran court.

Chevron said it was pleased with the 500-page ruling. Hewitt Pate, VP/general counsel, said in a statement: "We are confident that any court that respects the rule of law will find the Ecuadorian judgement to be illegitimate and unenforceable." He said Chevron's "reputation was taken hostage and held for a multi-billion-dollar ransom."

EDELMAN DELIVERS FOR PAPA JOHN'S

Papa John's, the No. 3 pizza delivery chain, has hired Edelman as its PR firm to elevate brand awareness and contribute to overall marketing strategy. PJ spokesman Darryl Carr said the company used FleishmanHillard for PR up until a year ago.

Edelman/Atlanta will handle the outreach. Mark Haas, president of Edelman USA, called PJ a "marquee brand."

Bob Kraut is PJ's chief marketing officer.

The Louisville-based client is the official sponsor of the National Football League. PJ's worked with Sitrick and Company last year after media pounced on remarks by founder John Schnatter about Obamacare.



Healthcare
Rankings Issue



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BRUNSWICK WORKS EBAY'S ICAHN DEFENSE

Ebay has enlisted Brunswick Group as it mounts a defense against activist investor Carl Icahn, who is pushing the online marketplace to spin off its PayPal operation.



Icahn nominated two staffers to eBay's board and is pushing shareholders to support "separating" PayPal from eBay. He sees a conflict with eBay board member

Marc Andreessen, whose venture capital firm backed PayPal.

Bloomberg News reported March 13 that eBay CEO John Donahoe is stepping up his offense against Icahn, including the enlistment of Brunswick and Goldman Sachs Group, and talking the previous Icahn targets like Apple and Netflix.

Ebay's board rejected Icahn's nominees and is pushing its slate of four for re-election, including Donahoe.

Icahn released open letters to eBay stockholders on March 3 and 12 supporting his push and likening eBay's board to a "politburo."

Icahn also said eBay sold Skype prematurely in 2009, adding "the full story of what really happened with Skype seems to us to continue to remain shrouded in the type of fog and mystery often engineered by highly paid public relations consultants and lawyers, the kind of folks who invent undemocratic entrenchment devices like dual class stock so that companies can take stockholder money and then tell them to 'sit down and shut up.'"

EX-OMC EXEC HITS KETCHUM ON UKRAINE

Angus Roxburgh, a former BBC reporter who worked the Russia account at Ketchum's Omnicom subcontractor sister unit Gplus, told the Daily Beast that his former firm is "utterly powerless" to affect the Kremlin's PR amid the Ukraine crisis.

"This is way, way, way above even their inflated pay grade," he said.

Ketchum's response to the invasion has been to say it does not advise the country on foreign policy. The PR firm is stressing that it handles economic development PR and facilitates media relations with the West. Ketchum and Brussels-based Gplus are owned by Omnicom.

Roxburgh called that a "stock answer," but suggested there is more to the firm's role. "The contract is supposedly aimed at making Russia more attractive as an investment destination, but of course that means helping them disguise all the issues that make it unattractive: human rights, invasions of neighboring countries, etc.," he said.

Roxburgh penned "The Strongman: Vladimir Putin and the Struggle for Russia," in 2011.



LB TALKS TURKEY

LB International Solutions is representing Turkey in conjunction with Dick Gephardt's Gephardt Group.

The firm, launched in D.C. in February, is the home of Lydia Borland, who once worked for Livingston Group, which was founded by former House Speaker-designate Bob Livingston. She served as Washington's representative of the Turkish-U.S. Business Council.

The firm of former House Majority Leader and Democratic presidential nominee contender re-upped with Turkey in January, inking a full-year pact worth \$1.4M. It has dealt with issues such as Syria, Hamas, Iranian sanctions and missile defense.

Turkey has been in the news regarding the prime minister's threat to crack down on social media following local elections at the end of the month.

Turkey's president subsequently denied any threat to restrict Internet outlets used to publicize corruption charges levied against the government.

BRODER WORKS SCIENCE MEDIA FOR INTREXON

Sam Broder, one-time director of the National Cancer Institute, is the new executive VP-scientific and PA, at Intrexon, the synthetic biotech company targeting health, food, energy, environment and consumer sectors.

He will lead communications programs with media, academic, government and non-governmental groups and bolster Intrexon's scientific publications.

Broder, who was chairman of the health unit, will report to CEO Randall Kirk.

The oncologist, who led NCI from 1989 to 1995, is credited with co-developing an effective treatment for AIDS/HIV.

Upon leaving the NCI, Broder served as VP-R&D for IVAX Corp. and chief medical officer at Celera.

Kirk lauded Broder as "an extremely gift scientist, physician and executive" who has contributed much to mankind and earned the respect of colleagues and the public.

DILENSCHNEIDER REPS SBARRO'S CH. 11

The Dilenschneider Group is counseling pizza chain Sbarro, which has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection for the second time in three years.

The Melville, N.Y.-based national chain of more than 800 eateries said its prepackaged reorganization plan has the backing of 98% of its lenders, who are providing \$20M in financing and eliminating \$140M in debt for substantially all the equity in the company.

Sbarro, owned by buyout firm MidOcean Partners since 2007, last month moved to close 155 of its locations in a bid to stave off bankruptcy.

Dilenschneider principal Jonathan Dedmon, based in Chicago, handles the Sbarro account.

In a statement, Sbarro CEO David Karam was optimistic about the company's future. "The agreement among the company's lenders is an indication of the support and confidence they have in the growth strategies developed by the new management team over the past nine months."

Sard Verbinnen & Co worked its 2011 bankruptcy.

BIG MEDIA VET MOVES TO FACEBOOK

Liz Heron, emerging media editor at the *Wall Street Journal*, has moved to Facebook to bolster its ties with reporters and journalism companies/institutions.

The *Washington Post* and *New York Times* alum announced her new job on FB, posting that she will “work directly on how FB partners with journalists and media organizations at a time when FB is putting a big emphasis on news and mobile.”

She views FB as an “incredible, vast database of human experience.”

The site “has a lot of news, sources to be developed, meaningful communities for journalists to build and experiments to be tried,” according to Heron.

She looks forward to approaching “news-gathering and storytelling from a new vantage point.”

BUFFETT BUYS GRAHAM'S MIAMI TV STATION

Berkshire Hathaway is buying WPLG in Miami from Graham Holdings Co., former parent of the *Washington Post*.

CEO Warren Buffett is a long-time holder of stock in GHC when it was the Washington Post Co.

The transaction, which has yet to be finalized, will be financed via cash and exchange of some of BH's shares in GHC.

GHC, which sold WaPo to Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, owns Kaplan educational services company; Cable One, cable TV operator in 19 midwestern, western and southern states; TV stations in Detroit, Houston, Orlando, San Antonio and Jacksonville; *Foreign Policy* and Slate.com

BH's media holdings consist of newspapers such as *Buffalo News*, *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and *Omaha World Herald*.

BERNERS-LEE WANTS ONLINE MAGNA CARTA

British computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee, who is credited with inventing the world wide web 25 years ago has called for an online Magna Carta to protect the rights of users against corporate and governmental assault.

He told The Guardian an open, neutral Internet is needed to promote transparency in government, democracy, improved healthcare, connected communities and cultural diversity.

TBL believes a “global constitution or bill of rights” is needed for the WWW. His Magna Carta plan is part of the global “web we want” initiative to promote the digital rights of citizens with support from the private and public sectors.

In light of the Edward Snowden revelations, TBL sees an urgent need to rein in the surveillance of citizens by security agencies such as the National Security Agency and Britain's GCHQ.

TBL sees WWW 25th anniversary as an opportunity to highlight security overreach, free speech and privacy issues so people regain control and “define the web we want for the next 25 years.”

SUCCESSION PLAN IN WORKS AT NYT CO

Six members of the extended Ochs-Sulzberger family are being groomed for leadership of the New York Times Co., publisher Pinch Sulzberger, 62, said March 13 during the “Media Minds” session held at New York's Bryant Park Grill.

Sulzberger assured the audience the family business isn't going to be sold any time soon. The complexity and structure of the NYTC family ownership makes it impossible for an outsider to buy the paper without its consent. The family trust owns 90 percent of Class B stock.

Sulzberger and vice chairman cousin Michael Golden are in constant touch with relatives who are deeply committed to the independence of the flagship newspaper and its mission of journalistic excellence.

The difference between the Ochs-Sulzberger and Bancroft family, which sold Dow Jones & Co. to Rupert Murdoch's News Corp, is that members work at and serve on the NYTC board, he said.

For instance, Sulzberger, who took the publisher role in 1992 from his dad, Punch, joined the paper in 1978 as Washington correspondent.

The company's latest proxy lists a half-dozen employees from the Ochs-Sulzberger family. Its board includes Steven Green, Sulzberger's brother-in-law, and Carolyn Greenspan, daughter of a cousin of fellow board members Golden and Sulzberger.

The controlling family is willing to “suck it up” during tough times as evidenced by the dividend cut in the aftermath of the 2009 meltdown.

Though they didn't like it, family members unanimously backed the reduction, according to Sulzberger.

Moderator Alex Jones, a NYT alum who remembers a younger Sulzberger “running around the newsroom in his stocking feet like he owned the place,” asked about the role of Mexican investor and billionaire Carlos Slim, owner of 17 percent of Class A shares.

Slim, whose investment bailed out the Times, is a “passive investor” who hasn't even asked for a seat on the board, said Sulzberger.

President CEO Mark Thompson added that he has less contact with Slim than with other major shareholders.

The BBC director-general was hired November 2012 as CEO to bring new blood to the enterprise, said Sulzberger. Though the family could “run the company in its sleep,” it needed new ideas for growth, he added.

Thompson sketched out the NYT future geared to “native advertising,” new products (Upshot, New York Times Now), videos and mobile. He promised that high-quality written journalism would remain at the core of the paper.

The company's future is not restrained by capital requirements, but by “brainpower” needed to develop ideas to drive innovation, said Thompson.

Citing past need for presses, trucks, paper and newsprint to fuel expansion in the era of print, Sulzberger said growth costs a lot less than it did 25 years ago.

The Knight Foundation funded the Media Minds meeting, while Gannett/USA served as media partner of the event, produced by Catherine Gay Communications.

BROOKINGS WANTS ITS MTV

The Brookings Institution, the left-leaning pillar of the Washington establishment, is crediting MTV for its part in the robust decline in teen-age pregnancy.

The pregnancy rate among teens plummeted 52 percent since 1991. Since the Obama presidency, that rate has been in free-fall, sinking 7.5 percent annually from 2008 and 2012. That's triple the rate during the Clinton and Bush years. But Brookings doesn't credit federal policy for the sinking pregnancy rate.

Brookings says better educational opportunities for young women and improved effectiveness and access to contraceptives are the consensus reasons for the decline in pregnancy.

It deals a wild card: media influences -- especially MTV's "16 and Pregnant," program, which hit the air in 2009, along with spin-offs "Teen Mom," "Teen Mom 2" and "Teen Mom 3." Those shows depict the hellish life of raising a child when the mother is barely beyond her own childhood.

In its research, Brookings tracked Nielsen, Google and Twitter data and found that the number of searches and Tweets for subjects like "birth control" and "abortion" spiked during the period in which one of programs aired.

Further breaking down the data, Brookings found the viewership spikes corresponded geographically to the time frame that MTV was showing the programs.

The think tank says the number of teen births declined 5.7 percent during the first 18 months after the debut of 16 and Pregnant. That's about one-third of the overall decline in birth.

US FOREIGN AID PUSH SEEKS PR FOR BOSNIA

The U.S. government's \$35M civilian foreign aid operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has reached out to PR firms to support its work in the country.

USAID asked firms this month to submit proposals for public awareness campaigns over a nine-month period starting in April.

Themes include natural resources and tourism, cultural diversity, get out the vote efforts, and youth entrepreneurship, among others.

Total budget for the PR push is set at \$125K, according to a procurement document.

The federal government's Bosnia push is aimed at helping the country establish political and governmental stability and move closer to the European Union.

Election year street protests flared in the country last month in the worst unrest since the civil war of 1992-95, according to IHS Jane's.

READER'S DIGEST PICKS KINTZER FOR HELM

Reader's Digest Association has named Bonnie Kintzer president/CEO, succeeding Bob Guth effective April 7. She will be RDA's fourth chief since 2011.

Kintzer, who most recently helmed Women's Marketing Inc., is a former RDA president/U.S. publishing and VP-global strategy and business redesign.

During her nine-year span at RDA, Kintzer was in charge of flagship *Reader's Digest*, *Taste of Home*, *Birds*

& *Blooms*, *Family Handyman*, and Allrecipes.com. She also launched *Every Day* with Rachael Ray.

Guth, who will remain chairman, praised Kintzer's tremendous knowledge of the publishing industry, strategic vision/marketing expertise and "intimate and valuable familiarity with the RDA organization."

Kintzer also ran Kintzer Bachar & Associates, management consultant shop focused on the media sector.

SWEENEY EXITS DISNEY

Anne Sweeney is leaving the co-chair slot at Disney Media Networks and president of Disney/ABC TV Group to pursue a career as a director, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*, which broke the story.

THR calls the 18-year Disney veteran "the most powerful women" in Tinsel Town.

The 56-year-old, who began her career at Nickelodeon and FX, presides over Disney Channel, which reaches 430M households; ABC broadcast network/studio and a 50 percent stake in A+E Networks.

Those properties generated \$11.9B in revenue and \$2.6B in annual profit.

Disney CEO Bob Iger said Sweeney's exit to depart is her own personal decision.

A search has begun for her replacement.

CHINA FIRM BACKS STUDIO LAUNCH

Three PR firms are handling the launch of a Hollywood studio venture backed by China's Hony Capital, private equity firm TPG, and veteran producers Robert Simonds and Gigi Pritzker.

The group said it will finance, produce and distribute from eight to 10 "star-driven" theatrical films globally per year. The partners said they plan to pour more than \$1B into production over the next five years.

"Star-driven, mid-budget films are an underserved market," said Simonds, who sees the group's experience in that niche providing leverage to partner with traditional distributors in North America, expand in a vast Chinese market, and capitalize on still-developing digital channels. He produced "Cheaper By the Dozen," "The Pink Panther," and "The Waterboy," among others.

Abernathy MacGregor Group reps Simonds. Owen Blinksilver PR is firm for TPG Growth, while Pritzker relies on Paul Pflug's Principal Communications Group.

Pritzker's credits include "Ender's Game," "Drive," and the Jon Stewart-directed "Rosewater."

Beijing-based Hony Capital, a unit of China's largest private equity firm by assets, Legend Holdings, is the "anchor" investor and has aligned with Chinese film and TV production giant SMG Pictures. Hony said it is the first investment a Chinese company has made into a Hollywood studio.

A former Viacom Entertainment executive takes that same title with the new venture, while ex-Crest Animation CEO Noah Fogelson is EVP of corporate development and general counsel.

The new studio has inked agreements with theater chains AMC Theaters, Regal Entertainment Group, Cinemark and Carmike.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**JAY SMITH, S&H CO-FOUNDER, DIES AT 64**

J. Brian Smith, who co-founded and built Smith & Harroff into a respected Washington-area PR and PA operation, died March 10. He was 64.

Smith, a former Republican Hill aide, joined with the late Mark Harroff in 1973 to set up the independent firm, which counts clients like the Nuclear Energy Institute, Westinghouse and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Smith, who went by the name "Jay," was CEO of the firm.

A 1971 graduate of Loyola College, he worked for the Republican National Committee after graduation through the 1972 presidential campaign. Smith briefly left S&H to serve as press secretary to House Republican Leader John Rhodes (R-Ariz.) during the debate over President Nixon's impeachment as Rhodes, a Nixon ally, pushed the president to resign.

Smith penned a 2005 biography of Rhodes, "Man of the House."

Rick Morris, president and senior partner at S&H who manages the firm, called Smith "a lifelong friend and business partner for more than 30 years."

KEHS TO HEAD HILL+KNOWLTON ENERGY UNIT

Michael Kehs is returning to Hill+Knowlton Strategies as head of the U.S. energy practice and Houston outpost.

The former head of the WPP unit's PA practice and D.C. office has been running his own firm since last year.

Previously, he was VP-strategic affairs and PR at Chesapeake Energy Corp, the \$17.5B Oklahoma City-based company. At Chesapeake, Kehs handled internal/external communications, served as media spokesperson and produced its first corporate responsibility report. Flamboyant CEO Aubrey McClendon, architect of Chesapeake, cut ties with it last year.

Kehs, who did stints at Porter Novelli and Burson-Marsteller, rejoined H+K on March 17.

Chris Gidez remains as head of H+K's global energy offering.

AIR INDIA PR REVIEW TAKES OFF

Air India has cleared for takeoff a tender process for PR as the government-owned national flagship carrier looks to burnish its image in India and abroad.

The airline, which does not have a firm on retainer, wants an agency with a strong in-country presence that also has experience in PR for multinational or top corporate companies, major airlines (other than Indian carriers), or the travel and tourism sector.

It is slated to join the industry's Star Alliance this year, a Germany-based network of global carriers.

India's *First Post* reported the airline's image "has taken a severe beating" because of a "dismal on-time performance and frequent work and pay-related issues with employees."

Proposals are due April 4. View the RFP at <http://www.airindia.com/tenders.htm?1>.

CORRECTION: In the March 10 "Finn Partners Plants Flag in Motor City" item, FP was misidentified in two places with the "RF" abbreviation.

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York Area**

Jacobstahl, New York/MiMedx, processor, marketer and distributor of human amniotic tissue for use in healing, as AOR, following a competitive pitch. Work includes corporate and brand positioning, strategic alliances, patient advocacy and media relations. Partner Sandra Stahl leads the account, reporting to Marlene DeSimone, SVP, corporate strategic dev., MiMedx.

Clearpath Health Communications, New York/Sci-derm, late stage clinical pharmaceuticals, for corporate, media, investor, patient and professional comms. The company is developing a treatment for epidermolysis bullosa, a rare genetic connective tissue condition affecting as many as 50,000 Americans and 80,000 Europeans. Clearpath is a venture of Russo Partners and Cooney/Waters.

GolinHarris, New York/NBTY, marketer of Nature's Bounty, Pure Protein and Vitamin World supplements, as AOR for PR, following a competitive review.

Shift Communications, New York/Socialbakers, social analytics, for media relations and comms. SB raised \$26M in Series C funding last month.

5W PR, New York/Perky Jerky, beef jerky snack food, for consumer PR.

Havas PR North America, New York/Au Bon Pain, as AOR; EPIC; Impossible.com; Just Go Girl; Lehigh University's Baker Center for Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovation, as AOR; MaleCare; National Brain Tumor Society; NOVA Chemicals; the Nugget Spot, takeout eatery, and Penn Wharton Public Policy Initiative.

M&C Saatchi, New York/Beyond Sport United, professional sports league confab slated for June 11 at Yankee Stadium, for PR for a fourth straight year. Senior VP Sandra Carreon-John leads the account.

South

Kelly Fletcher PR, Knoxville, Tenn./Baker Motor Company Charleston Fashion Week 2014, for national fashion media relations for the week-long event.

Southeast

TransMedia Group, Boca Raton, Fla./Wall Street Media Co., operator of Wall-Street.com, to promote the site and its "Top Six" list of rising public companies.

RockOrange, Miami/Gulliver Schools, for external, internal and executive comms.

Landmark Media Americas, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla./Myrtle Beach Golf Holiday, golf marketing cooperative representing more than 100 golf courses, hotels and golf travel companies, for a PR campaign to attract visitors to the "Golf Capital of the World."

Balsera Communications, Miami/Our Kids of Miami Dade and Monroe, community care organization for foster care and adoption services, for PR, events, crisis comms. and digital.

Hanover|Elite, Sanford, Fla./UBL Interactive, local and mobile search visibility services, for PR and IR.

West

Global Results Communications, Irvine, Calif./IN-STEON, home automation and control technology, for media and analyst relations, speaking engagements and industry awards.

O'Dwyer's Rankings of Healthcare PR Firms

Firm	City	2013 Net Fees	Firm	City	2013 Net Fees
1. Edelman	New York	\$114,410,747	35. Singer Associates	San Francisco	\$1,250,000
2. W2O Group	San Francisco	\$57,112,000	36. Bliss Integrated Comms.	New York	\$975,000
3. Ruder Finn	New York	\$25,508,000	37. Gregory FCA	Ardmore, PA	\$950,000
4. APCO Worldwide	Washington	\$22,902,463	38. Jackson Spalding	Atlanta	\$931,862
5. Cooney/Waters Group	New York	\$14,020,940	39. Lewis PR	San Francisco	\$896,000
6. Makovsky	New York	\$7,800,000	40. L.C. Williams & Associates	Chicago	\$880,455
7. Waggener Edstrom Comms.	Bellevue	\$7,543,000	41. CooperKatz & Co.	New York	\$832,166
8. Dodge Communications	Alpharetta	\$7,006,911	42. Perry Communications Group	Sacramento	\$831,892
9. Zeno Group	New York	\$6,152,376	43. Fahlgren Mortine	Columbus	\$808,841
10. Spectrum	Washington	\$6,102,379	44. Seigenthaler Public Relations	Nashville	\$738,091
11. PadillaCRT	Minneapolis	\$6,095,625	45. Standing Partnership	St. Louis	\$730,674
12. GYMR	Washington	\$6,064,518	46. Sachs Media Group	Tallahassee	\$710,793
13. ReviveHealth	Nashville	\$5,300,000	47. Levick Strategic Comms.	Washington	\$579,410
14. Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock	Brentwood	\$5,054,163	48. Rosica Communications	Paramus	\$553,800
15. Crosby Marketing Comms.	Annapolis	\$4,804,999	49. Regan Communications Group	Boston	\$484,500
16. Racepoint Global	Boston	\$4,487,292	50. Schneider Associates	Boston	\$408,075
17. Public Communications Inc.	Chicago	\$4,025,867	51. Trevelino/Keller	Atlanta	\$360,000
18. MWW Group	New York	\$3,352,000	52. Highwire PR	San Francisco	\$343,000
19. Coyne PR	Parsippany, NJ	\$3,305,000	53. Beehive PR	St. Paul	\$331,979
20. Allison+Partners	San Francisco	\$3,300,000	54. rbb Public Relations	Miami	\$329,035
21. Finn Partners	New York	\$2,830,092	55. VPE Public Relations	So. Pasadena	\$310,786
22. 5W Public Relations	New York	\$2,800,000	56. Bridge Global Strategies	New York	\$296,292
23. SS PR	Northfield	\$2,700,000	57. Marketing Maven PR	Camarillo	\$270,686
24. Seven Twenty Strategies	Washington	\$2,495,542	58. Linhart Public Relations	Denver	\$256,920
25. Rasky Baerlein Strategic Comms.	Boston	\$2,388,689	59. Maccabee	Minneapolis	\$223,024
26. Kyne Communications	New York	\$2,249,844	60. TransMedia Group	Boca Raton	\$175,000
27. RF Binder Partners	New York	\$2,222,975	61. Idea Grove	Dallas	\$127,553
28. Hunter PR	New York	\$1,970,964	62. Landis Communications	San Francisco	\$110,000
29. Lambert, Edwards + Assocs.	Grand Rapids	\$1,586,943	63. Red Sky PR	Boise	\$70,567
30. Moore Comms. Group	Tallahassee	\$1,537,440	64. Weiss PR	Baltimore	\$66,000
31. French West Vaughan	Raleigh	\$1,475,000	65. OCG PR	Ft. Worth	\$56,366
32. Dye, Van Mol & Lawrence	Nashville	\$1,268,636	66. BizCom Associates	Addison	\$36,000
33. McNeely Pigott & Fox PR	Nashville	\$1,261,353	67. Hope-Beckham	Atlanta	\$34,589
34. Pan Communications	Boston	\$1,260,000			

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SARD VERBINNEN STREAMS BEATS MUSIC

Beats Music is working with Sard Verbinnen on corporate PR as the privately held company looks to parlay the success of Beats by Dre headphones and speakers into the streaming music business.

The service, aimed to compete with music providers like Spotify and Pandora, launched in January with a 20M-song catalog and \$9.99/month price tag. Record industry titan Jimmy Iovine and recording artist Dr. Dre, who teamed up for the Beats by Dre success, are among developers of the project.

After an initial \$60M funding round, the Santa Monica-based company reportedly raised as much as \$100M in equity financing in a second round, according to Bloomberg News.

Mett Benson, a founding member of Sard Verbinnen's San Francisco office, handles the Beats Music business. The firm worked parent Beats Electronics' \$500M investment from Carlyle Group in September as the private equity firm bought out Beats investor HTC.

PMK*PNC has worked with the Beats by Dre brand on marketing and brand communications.

DAVIS CAMPAIGN ALIGNS PR AFTER STUMBLES

Zac Petkanas, communications director of the Nevada Democratic Party, has been named to that title for the high-profile Texas gubernatorial campaign of state senator Wendy Davis.

The Davis campaign has suffered a series of PR stumbles in its uphill push against former state attorney general Greg Abbott and the San Antonio News Express reported last month that changes in the communications operation were afoot.

In addition to Petkanas, the campaign added Obama for America Texas alum Hector Nieto as a traveling press secretary. Bo Delp, who held the comms. director slot and was previously a press assistant at the Environmental Protection Agency, was bumped down to deputy.

Petkanas is a former communications deputy to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and comms. director to Rep. Kathy Dahlkemper (D-Pa.).

He was also press secretary to Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.). Rebecca Acuna is press secretary to Davis.

On the Abbott campaign trail, Abe Huerta is press secretary and Matt Hirsch is communications director.

OMNICOM LOSES STOCKHOLDER SUITS

U.S. District Courts in New York and Boston have rejected attempts by Omnicom to block requests that stockholder voting totals be kept confidential until the annual meeting. OMC, headed by John Wren and Randall Weisenburger, who had combined pay packages totaling \$84.5 million in 2012, had bypassed a free SEC process to sue stockholder John Chevedden in four federal courts in an effort to retain exclusive access to stockholder voting in advance of the annual meeting.

Chevedden had claimed that the OMC lawsuits exerted “a chilling effect” on stockholder democracy. Judge Louis Stanton of U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York last week denied OMC’s motion for summary judgment on the matter and granted Chevedden’s motion to dismiss.

He noted that Chevedden had promised not to sue OMC if the SEC upheld OMC’s request for exclusive access to voting by stockholders in advance of the meeting.

“The threat of injury from corporate misjudgment is too remote and speculative to present a justiciable controversy under Article III of the U.S. Constitution,” he wrote.

Judge Mark Wolf of U.S. District Court in Boston dismissed OMC suits vs. Chevedden and James Ritchie, a small stockholder who also sought a measure in favor of confidential voting (i.e., not letting management have an exclusive view on how stockholder votes are going).

EMC Corp. had lodged suits similar to those of OMC.

Chevedden told Reuters that the rulings were “overwhelmingly positive.” With the suits, companies are dodging precedents giving shareholders their say, he added.

Reuters was unable to obtain a comment from OMC. The O’Dwyer Co. has also sought unsuccessfully to obtain a comment from OMC’s spokesperson Joanne Trout.

Dave Farmer, spokesperson for EMC, told Reuters that Wolf’s decision “did not reach the issue of whether the proposal satisfies SEC rules” and that EMC “is exploring all its options.”

WEBER SHANDWICK’S NORTON TO J&J

Jennifer Norton, senior VP/corporate communications at Weber Shandwick, is leaving for Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen unit.

“We are very pleased that Jennifer Norton will be joining us as Senior Director, North America Communication, and look forward to working with her to continue to share our Janssen story with employees and key stakeholders,” Rebecca Tillet, Janssen’s VP-global pharmaceuticals communications & PA, said via email.

Norton is a seven-year veteran of Interpublic’s PR flagship. Earlier, she did a ten-year stint at Burson-Marsteller (director brand marketing & PA) and a nearly two-year run at G.S. Schwartz & Co. (senior account supervisor).

Janssen provides medicines for attention deficit disorder, mental health, neurologics, pain management and women’s health.

CLOSURE SYSTEM DEV WANTS PR PITCHES

The company behind closure technology used for footwear and other applications is on the hunt for a PR firm to help target sectors like golf, snowboards and athletic shoemakers.

Boa Technology, the Colorado-based company that has seen its twist-fastening system adopted by brands like K2, Vans and DC Snowboarding, released an open RFP for a retainer account to help grow national awareness of the system. Coordination and execution of a national PR plan, content development, media relations and monitoring are among tasks covered in a scope of services outlined in the RFP.

Utility/safety footwear and cycling are other sectors Boa wants to reach as its system’s use expands from footwear to apparel and even medical uses.

Budget will be billed monthly and set around \$80K. Garrett Graubins (garrett[at]boatechnology[dot]com) is handling the search.

Proposals are due April 4. RFP: <http://bit.ly/1gxzYt6>.

ICR ADVISES EATERY IPOs

ICR is providing financial communications counsel to two eatery chains planning separate initial public offerings.

Zoe’s Kitchen, the expanding Birmingham, Ala.-based fast casual chain of 110 Mediterranean-style eateries in 15 states, registered March 10 for an IPO to raise up to \$80.5M. ICR senior VP Liz Brady DiTrapano works with Zoe’s, which had revenue topping \$116M in 2013 on a net loss of \$3.7M. It plans a New York Stock Exchange listing.

ICR also advises Vancouver-based Papa Murphy’s Holdings, the “take ‘n’ bake” pizza franchise which makes fresh pizzas for customers to cook at home, is looking to raise up to \$70M with its NASDAQ offering. ICR senior VP Jessica Liddell oversees that account.

Lee Equity Partners controls Papa Murphy’s, which has 1,418 locations—company-owned and franchised—and annual revenues north of \$80M. Net loss for 2013 was \$2.6M.

Reuters noted the latest filings come amid a strong wave of restaurant chain IPOs.

NY PR PRO DAN ROHER DIES AT 88

Dan Roher, a 30-year New York PR pro who built and ran Roher PR until 1996, died March 5. He was 88.

Roher founded his firm as Daniel S. Roher Inc. in 1969 after four years on the staff of the late Rep. Joseph Resnick (D-N.Y.). His sons, Richard, based in Chappaqua, N.Y., and Torin, from West Linn., Ore., continue to manage the firm.

Roher handled a variety of clients in the tech, financial, corporate, B2B and association sectors.

The 1946 graduate of Baruch College started out in the ad agency realm and later handled advertising and PR in-house for Channel Master Corp. before moving to politics with Resnick as campaign manager and assistant.

In addition to his sons, Roher is survived by his wife of 63 years, Florence, and daughter Deborah, and two grandchildren.

PRSA Must Not Repeat Murray Mistake.

Bill Murray, the resigned CEO of PRSA, was the worst Society staff head we have experienced since 1968—temperamentally and physically unsuited for the job. This mistake must not be repeated.

We hope to recruit a dozen PR veterans who will make a thorough study of this situation and work to prevent the hiring of another square peg for a round hole. The best elements of PR (public exposure) and the law (cross-examination, detailed exhibits) will be marshaled.

The Society's habit is to keep its COOs for six or more years, mostly out of pure laziness. It's just too much trouble to hunt down, negotiate with, and hire a new COO. Few viable candidates are showing up and we can guess why.

Typically, a non-PR person is hired to head a staff that is just about bereft of PR people. The out-of-towners who run the Society don't want to share power with New Yorkers.

Murray's Flaws Were Obvious

How was Murray picked when he showed an immediate aversion to being questioned (his interview with Auburn University students in January 2007, where he demanded questions in advance and would not let the students talk to him directly), and the fact that he had a speech impediment (spasmodic dysphonia)?

It's fine to hire the handicapped but not if the handicap interferes with job performance. Murray was supposed to be a "charismatic leader" with a "vision of PR" and an "accomplished public speaker."

His public appearances were rare. He never addressed the New York chapter. He never appeared on any broadcast media that we know of. We had one lunch with him--in February 2007. We never spoke with him on the phone and most e-mails to him were not returned.

Until Joe Cohen returned an e-mail last week, no Society chair had dealt with us at all since 2006.

Search Committee Shares Blame

Why was he hired? The seven-member search committee, a flawed group if ever there was one, craved someone with "status." Murray was at the Motion Picture Assn., a group with a high profile and status.

The search committee had one member who never should have been on it—Karla Voth, the Society's VP of special events which includes the annual conference.

Voth, then with the Society 16 years and now with it 23 years, was in the position of hiring her own boss. She was going to favor someone who would not interfere with the Society's big event, the annual conference attended by 4% of members. That statistic is from 2005 president Judith Phair and it's also borne out by succeeding attendance lists.

This year's conference is in D.C. Oct. 11-14 although it was just there in 2010. Cost is \$1,195 for members until Aug. 22 and \$1,495 after that.

Voth, Murray, chair Joe Cohen and VP-corporate development John Robinson were at the Springfield, Va., Country Club Saturday, March 1, promoting the conference. It could be they are worried about attendance. Murray re-

signed from the Society on March 7, less than a week later.

Conference "Tail" Wags the Society

Far too much time and money is spent on the conference which is a boondoggle for a select few.

Staff get to travel all over the country looking at sites and making arrangements. More than half the staff goes to the conference. Educators, the dominant group at the Society, replacing counselors, flock to the event, earning credits as conference speakers and insuring that the sacred APR credential remains untouched

Logically, it should be in New York every year because the city has at least 20 times as many "communicators" (PR people, reporters, media, ad people, financial and IR people, etc.) as any other city. The largest conference ever was the one in New York in 2004 (4,000 attendance). The conference is the "tail" that wags the Society "dog." New York is a big draw—52 million visitors in 20013.

2006 Search Committee Was Flawed

Other members of the 2006 search committee were its chair, Debra Miller, then at Clark University; Robert Pritchard of Ball State University, chair of the Educators Academy; Pender McCarter, IEEE-USA, a technical assn.; David Rickey, then VP-PR, Alfa (insurance) Corp., a highly active leader who was national treasurer in 2012; Grace Leong, president of Hunter PR, former Society board member, and Ellen Shedlarz, head of Human Resources, Hill+Knowlton Strategies, who was not a member of the Society.

The committee had two academics, two association people, two counselors and one corporate person. It was a committee wedded to the mistaken culture of the Society which is to have a staff almost totally devoid of PR people headed by a non-PR person. The Society was sent on this fatal path by 1980 president Patrick Jackson, Rye, N.H., counselor, whose attitude to the press was "duck 'em, screw 'em, and go direct."

Miller Says Board Made Choice

Miller, now director of marketing at Quarles & Brady, Milwaukee, 400-member law firm, said the board made the decision about Murray.

She recalls Murray was one of "two or three" candidates given to the board. However, the search committee bears heavy responsibility for coming up with Murray in the first place. It can't dodge this burden.

Society COOs, until the revolution led by Jackson, were press-friendly. Rea Smith, staff head for much of the 1970s, was a career PR person who welcomed reporters to the Society's midtown h.q. and let them use the library. Reporters were invited to be Silver Anvil judges. Her predecessor, Quentin Harvell, had no problems with press relations.

With the arrival of Betsy Kovacs, COO from 1980-93, Smith was named to the Society's Foundation, booted to an office on Madison ave., and barred from entering Society offices. A widow, whose husband was PR practitioner Shirley Smith, Rea Smith was found dead in her bathtub at the age of 63. Some suspected she committed suicide.

— Jack O'Dwyer