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# O'Dwyer's

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March 13, 2023 Vol. 56 No. 11

## **OHIO DOT WANTS BIDS ON PUBLIC INFO PUSH**

The Ohio Dept. of Transportation wants a partner to handle its \$1.5M public information campaign to raise awareness of traffic safety in the Buckeye State.

The selected firm will work with the Dept. to determine messaging, creative assets and targeted audiences.

It also will negotiate media coverage and evaluate the reach of each campaign.

ODOT's campaign will include print, TV, radio, digital, social media and outdoor platforms.

The Dept. will issue a two-year contract. It may renew the pact for up to five additional two-year periods contingent on funding by Ohio's General Assembly.

Proposals are due March 21. They go to [contracts.purchasing@dot.ohio.gov](mailto:contracts.purchasing@dot.ohio.gov).

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



## **EXXONMOBIL'S ZIRKELBACH REJOINS PHRMA**

Robby Zirkelbach will return to the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America group as EVP of PA and strategic initiatives next month.

He led PhRMA's PA unit from 2017 to 2020 before exiting for the global head of issues & advocacy at ExxonMobil.

At PhRMA, Zirkelbach will oversee PR, media relations, advertising, and internal communications.

He also will head a new group that will work on developing strategies to deal with the emerging issues that impact the pharmaceutical sector.

PhRMA president Stephen Ubl said he's excited that Zirkelbach is returning to the group "as we navigate the current political landscape and fight for policies that benefit patients and protect pharmaceutical innovation."

Prior to his first stint at PhRMA, Zirkelbach was VP-strategic communications at America's Health Insurance Plans and press secretary for Republican Congressman Jim Nussle of Iowa.



**Robby Zirkelbach**

## **META PLATFORMS' FLOYD MOTORS TO GM**

Kia Floyd, who was director of state and local public policy at Meta Platforms, has joined General Motors in Washington.

As executive director for state and local government, Floyd reports to Omar Vargas, VP and head of global public policy.

Floyd has an extensive background in identifying corporate partnerships, directing policy and campaigns, and supporting investments.

Prior to Meta, she was director of state public policy at The RELX Group and associate counsel at the Connecticut Business & Industry Association.

She also was deputy secretary of external affairs for the mayor of Philadelphia.



**Kia Floyd**

## **POSHMARK'S MCCANN TAKES PVH CCO POST**

Amber McCann, who was VP of global brand and communications at the Poshmark social commerce platform will join PVH Corp. on April 6.

She will take the EVP and CCO title at the parent company of the Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger brands.

McCann also worked as VP, global corporate reputation at Levi Strauss, head of internal communications at Yahoo! Europe and senior manager, corporate communications at Gap Inc.

"Amber has an impressive track record as an innovative brand and corporate communications leader," said PVH Corp. CEO Stefan Larsson.

PVH posted a 2.8 revenue gain to \$6.5B for the nine-month period ended October. Net income nosedived 89 percent to \$61.7M.

Larsson said PVH's Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger brands executed well overseas despite challenging macro conditions in Europe and the lingering COVID impact in Asia.

In North America, Larsson saw some positive performance indicators, "especially how consumers are responding to and engaging with our brands."



**Amber McCann**

## **FTI RECRUITS EXXONMOBIL'S SOPER**

Steven Soper, a six-year veteran at ExxonMobil who ran its US state government relations practice, has joined FTI Consulting in Dallas.



**Steven Soper**

He takes on the senior managing director slot in FTI's strategic communications group that posted \$287M in revenues during 2022.

Prior to ExxonMobil, Soper spent nearly a decade at Burson-Marsteller's Direct Impact unit.

He also was deputy regional director of the Bush-Cheney '04 presidential campaign, director of political education at the Republican National Committee and associate director of political affairs

at the Bush II White House.

Soper will strengthen FTI's ability to help clients navigate complex policy and communications challenges in its fast-growing Texas market, said Brian Kennedy, head of its Americas stratcom unit.

## **KING CO. SEEKS EQUITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE PLAN**

Washington's King County, which includes Seattle, is looking for proposals for an equity and social justice plan for the Dept. of Community and Health Services' Behavior Health & Recovery Division.



### **King County**

In 2020, King County declared racism a public health crisis. It has budgeted \$25M during the 2023-24 budget cycle to undo the harms of racism compounded by the COVID pandemic.

The RFP calls for building trust, cultural awareness and humility within the BHRD management team members.

King County has budgeted \$80K for Phase 1 (one year) of the equity and social justice plan. It retains the option to renew for another one-year period.

Responses are due March 22. Interested firms must register at the King County [e-portal](#).

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

## **FINANCIAL JOURNO DORAN COMES TO SITRICK**

James Doran, who did an eight-year stint as Wall Street bureau chief for The Times of London, has joined [Sitrick And Company](#)'s New York office.

He also worked at *The Financial Times*, Bloomberg and *The National*.



**James Doran**

Most recently, Doran was senior strategic communications advisor for the Family Office of Lex Greensill and global head of PR and media for Greensill Capital.

Earlier, he was head of content and thought leadership for the Government of Dubai Commodities Authority and senior communications advisor for the National Bank of Abu Dhabi.

Mike Sitrick said Doran "brings extensive knowledge and experience across the communications spectrum to the firm and its clients."

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

**Qorvis** relaunches its brand, following the Dec. 31 management buyout of the global advisory and strategic communications agency led by long-time Qorvis executive Matt Lauer. Lauer, who has been with the agency since 2004, founded its public diplomacy brand and manages communications campaigns for multinational corporations and sovereign governments, now serves as CEO. In addition to a refreshed brand, the relaunch includes two new primary hubs in Geneva and Dubai; three purpose-built practice groups (strategic communications, geopolitical solutions and market intelligence & compliance); and such new capabilities as capital and financial transaction compliance and transparency solutions, and branded news and premium content.

**Hill+Knowlton Strategies** acquires **3K Agentur für Kommunikation**, a Frankfurt, Germany-based healthcare specialist PR agency. 3K will become part of the Hill+Knowlton Strategies global network. Founded 25 years ago, 3K has

worked with some of the world's most notable global pharmaceutical companies, consumer health brands, and local biotech start-ups. "Germany is our third largest market, and the addition of 3K to Hill+Knowlton's growing portfolio further strengthens WPP's global healthcare offer to clients," said WPP chief executive officer Mark Read.

**Crowe PR**, which works with healthcare technology, consumer goods and hospitality brands, and **ParkerWhite**, a B2B and B2C branding and digital marketing firm focused on healthcare and wellness, form a strategic alliance in the medical technology space. Crowe provides media relations, thought leadership, social amplification, crisis communications, influencer marketing, and content creation. ParkerWhite offers brand strategy, creative services, website design and development, digital marketing, social media, and video/television production services.

**5WPR's** Impact team, which provides pro bono services and promotes volunteerism for staff-nominated causes, is partnering with Legal Momentum, which was founded as the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund in 1970. 5W will be working alongside Legal Momentum to promote the organization's efforts in a range of areas addressing gender equality.

**Stagwell** launches a Comms Tech Business Unit within the Stagwell Marketing Cloud, its proprietary suite of SaaS products built for in-house marketers. The new unit will be led by Aaron Kwittken, founder and CEO of PR-driven predictive platform PRophet (the unit's flagship product). Alongside its launch, the Comms Tech Unit joined forces with Axios to introduce "Taylor," which the company says is the communications industry's first free AI writing tool, at South by Southwest in Austin, TX. The tool is intended to help PR, content and social media professionals create first drafts or re-generate existing drafts of pitches, press releases, bylines, blog posts, social posts and more.

**Adfactors PR**, is hosting the PROI Worldwide Global Summit in New Delhi through March 16. The 2023 Global Summit, which has the theme of "New World Spirit," will feature a series of presentations and panel discussions on such topics as data analytics, artificial intelligence, ESG, leadership at independent agencies, and growth strategies.



## **SOCIAL MEDIA LEADS SEARCH FOR BRANDS**

In recent years, social media platforms have become popular resources for people to search and shop for products. According to [a report conducted by audience research](#)



[company GWI](#), this phenomenon has exploded in the post-pandemic landscape, with social platforms like TikTok and Instagram becoming top hunting grounds for people—especially members of the Z and Millennial generations—to find products and discover brands.

GW's flagship report, which highlights trends in the global media landscape, found that while Google still rules when it comes to search, the percentage of people who now discover brands via traditional search has dipped somewhat in the last five years, from 37 percent in 2018 to 31 percent in 2022.

Meanwhile, social media sites are quickly gaining steam for this purpose. According to the report, nearly two-thirds (61 percent) of people who use Instagram now also use that platform to find information about products. The same goes for 54 percent of Facebook users, 52 percent of TikTok users, 39 percent of Pinterest users, 39 percent of Twitter users, 33 percent of Reddit users and 25 percent of Snapchat users.

Overall, the number of people now searching for products on social media has risen 43 percent since 2015, according to the report. TikTok alone has seen a seven-percent increase in people using the short-form video platform to follow brand accounts since late 2020.

This phenomenon appears especially pronounced among younger consumers. The GWI report found that globally, Gen Zers now use Instagram almost as often as Google to discover brands. And among TikTok users, 46 percent of Gen Zers and Millennials polled admitted they make an impulse purchase online at least once every two to three weeks.

Social media continues to take up an increasing share of people's daily time. Globally, Internet users spend nearly two-and-a-half hours a day on social media sites in 2022. Again, this growth is particularly apparent among younger generations, as Gen Zers spent an average of nearly three hours (two hours and 44 minutes) on social media per day last year. Interestingly, overall online time appears to have hit a ceiling around the world, with the global, average daily time users spent online dipping year-over-year to about six hours and 43 minutes in 2022, down from six hours and 56 minutes in 2021. For members of the Gen Z cohort, that number is even more pronounced, as average daily time among Gen Zers fell nine percent last year from the year prior.

Finally, the GWI report tackled the issue of second screening, or the practice of busying oneself with a second digital device while watching TV in the background. This phenomenon has climbed among all age groups in recent years, but members of the Z generation seem to be noted proponents of performing this double screening duty. More than two-thirds (69 percent) of Gen Z respondents said they chat or send messages to friends while watching TV. More than half (56 percent) said they scroll on social media while watching TV, 44 percent reported play games, 32 percent search for products and 32 percent check their emails or read the news.

GW's "[Global Media Landscape](#)" report was based on figures drawn from its internal annual research, which polled 900,000 Internet users aged 16-64 across 48 markets via an online questionnaire.

## **EQUAL TREATMENT ELUDES WOMEN AT WORK**

While women make up 40 percent of the global workforce, they're still lagging behind when it comes to equal treatment in areas ranging from the workplace to STEM disciplines to the online world. That's the conclusion of a new report from TEAM LEWIS Foundation.

"[Participation Parity](#)," which was conducted in support of HeForShe (the UN Women Solidarity Movement for Gender Equity) and International Women's Day, finds that while women are definitely gaining in all those areas, the hurdles they face have not been overcome yet. The study's authors add that the contributions of male allies could play a major role in moving the needle forward.

Although three out of 10 of the women surveyed (30 percent) said there was a lack of female mentors and role models in their organizations, the number of women in senior management positions is on the rise. More than half of the women responding to the survey (56 percent) said —there were women in senior management roles at their workplaces, while 82 percent said there were women in "high-level roles."

For women working in STEM disciplines, the hurdles seem to be a bit higher. 55 percent of the young women noted that "there is a stigma surrounding women in STEM jobs."

Although women are entering online spaces that were once overwhelmingly male-dominated (such as gaming), they are facing relatively high levels of sexism and misogyny there. More than half of the women surveyed (53 percent) and nearly as many men (47 percent) said that the number of sexist comments they see online makes them uncomfortable.

But many of those bothered by the comments avoid confronting the perpetrators. More than four in 10 (42 percent) women surveyed said they avoid addressing sexism online because they fear retaliation, with 29 percent of men agreeing.

There does appear to be widespread belief that it's necessary to combat online sexism, with over three-quarters (76 percent) of women and 72 percent of men saying it is "important for individuals to take a stand against sexist comments."

TEAM LEWIS' study polled more than 6,000 respondents across the US, UK, Germany, France, Mexico, Singapore, China, Spain and the Netherlands from February 16-27.



## **GASTHALTER HANDLES ZERONOX SPAC DEAL**

Gasthalter & Co. is handling media for the merger of ZeroNox Inc., the leader in the electrification of off-highway vehicles market, with the Growth for Good SPAC in a deal valued at more than \$300M.

ZeroNox sees a potential \$1.3T market spanning the construction, agricultural, mining segment, as well as electric vehicle retrofits.



President Robert Cruess said ZeroNox's proprietary electric powertrain platform "delivers best-in-class battery and motor performance, intelligence, and charging capability."

New York-based Growth for Good is focused on sustainable and socially responsible companies.

CEO Yana Watson Kakar said the ZeroNox deal "comes at a time when the need for increased electrification in support of the health of our planet has never been greater."

Gasthalter & Co.'s Amanda Shpiner and Sara Widmann are working the transaction.

## **AZ COUNTY MULLS ‘CUISINE TOURISM’ PUSH**

Santa Cruz County is looking for a firm to develop a market study to assess the economic potential of a “southern Arizona cuisine tourism initiative” as a strategy to help the tourism sector rebound from the pandemic.

The selected firm will conduct a market analysis based on data from local wineries and leisure-related businesses to gauge the opportunities to increase tourism spending and overnight visits.

Santa Cruz County has not captured its fair share of the growing Arizona travel market, according to its government officials.

If the market analysis shows good potential for a cuisine tourism push, Santa Cruz County may issue another RFP cover branding/marketing for one.

Proposals for the market analysis project are due March 21. They go to: Alma Schultz; Clerk of the Board of Supervisors; Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors; 2150 North Congress Drive, Room 119; Nogales, AZ 85621

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

## **FINN PARTNERS STRENGTHENS HEALTH TEAM**

[Finn Partners](#) has added Robin Pomeranz Cronin as creative director and Ivan Ruiz as partner, global digital health to its healthcare practice.



**Robin Pomeranz Cronin, Ivan Ruiz**

Cronin was VP at Ogilvy PR’s creative studio and most recently served as head of creative at Syneos Health.

Ruiz joins Finn from Goodfuse Communications, where he was SVP, Innovation Studio working on social and digital marketing campaigns for pharmaceutical and biotech companies.

Cronin reports to Matt Bostrom, managing partner. Ruiz reports to Ritesh Patel, senior partner, global digital health.

## **FGS, JOELE FRANK WORK 3-D PRINTER BID**

[FGS Global](#) represents Nano Dimension as the 3D printing company makes an unsolicited \$1.1B bid to purchase the 85 percent stake in Stratasys Ltd. that it doesn’t own.

The \$18 cash offer represents a 36 percent premium over Stratasys’ March 1 closing price.

Nano claims the combination with Stratasys would create a global leader in 3D printing. It notes that Stratasys is positioned as a leader in the developed market for premium polymer-based 3D printing systems, materials and consumables, while Nano is a pioneer in growth segments in challenging applications including electronics, microfabrication, and high-performance components.

Nano has communicated with Stratasys and wants to work toward a mutually acceptable deal.

Stratasys, which uses [Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher](#) for financial PR, promises to review the bid.

FGS Global has Kal Goldberg, Bryan Locke and Kelsey Markovich repping Nano. Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher’s Ed Trissel, Joseph Sala, Kara Brickman and Motti Scherf are handling Stratasys.



## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

CGPR, [French/West/Vaughan](#)’s Boston-area office specializing in the outdoor, fitness, fashion, lifestyle and travel sectors, signs on as agency of record for Trerè Innovation, an Italian company that provides products and services in the high-tech apparel and footwear sectors. CGPR is working with the company to introduce its footwear, baselayers and socks to the US market through media relations, events and influencer engagement. CGPR has also been named AOR for The Woolmark Company, the global authority on Merino wool, and Tread Labs, an insoles manufacturer that is introducing a line of warm weather sandals this spring.

LDPR has been named agency of record for the **Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria** in Sorrento, Italy. The agency will be overseeing all PR programming including print and digital media relations, influencer and brand partnerships, and media visit programs. Owned and operated by the Fiorentino family since 1834, the property is surrounded by a five-acre park and 25 minutes from Capri and 30 minutes from Positano, the Amalfi Coast and Pompeii.



**The Romans** lands **King**, maker of Candy Crush, the top grossing mobile gaming franchise in U.S. app stores. The agency will handle creative campaigns, events, stunts, and ongoing press office activities, with a focus on King’s key markets in the US and UK. The account will be led on a day-to-day basis in the US by vice president Katherine Espinosa and in Europe by director Kate Brazier. “We were looking for a global agency with an implicit understanding of gaming, tech, and most importantly, culture,” said King brand communications lead Louise Ramsden.

**Bob Gold & Associates** lands **Impossible Cloud**, a platform that offers multi-service cloud solutions. The agency will work to promote Impossible Cloud as the first decentralized, enterprise-grade cloud service platform leveraging web3 technology to serve traditional business customers. Impossible Cloud is led by a team of experienced tech-company founders including Kai Wawrzinek (Goodgame Studios), Christian Kaul (Airbnb, Stillfront, Groupon), and Daniel Baker (D2iQ, Stillfront, Mesosphere, Iron Mountain). It recently announced a €7 million seed funding round, bringing its funding to date to more than €10 million (approximately \$10.9 million).



**Allied Sports** picks up influencer marketing and brand partnerships duties for **ShiftPixy**, a workforce management platform for businesses with shift-based employees. The agency will promote the company’s Digital Food Brands of Shift Pixy Labs, which is focused on transforming the digital dining experience through web and in-app gamification, augmented reality activations and NFT avatars. “The team at Allied Sports brings an impressive track record of identifying and executing successful partnership marketing campaigns,” said ShiftPixy co-founder and CEO Scott Absher.

**The Consultancy PR** adds **Form + Field**, a San Francisco-based interior design firm that specializes in “empathetic and creatively integrated interiors.” The agency is leading PR strategy, media relations and thought leadership. Serving clients on both coasts, Form + Field works on both residential and commercial spaces, with an emphasis on art, architecture and eclectic modernism.

## SYMMES TAKES MCGUIREWOODS POST

Brian Symmes, who was deputy chief of staff for communications for South Carolina governor Henry McMaster has joined McGuireWoods Consulting.



**Brian Symmes**

He began his career as deputy press secretary for then-SC governor Nikki Haley in 2013 and took over the communications team when McMaster took the reins at the Palmetto State.

Symmes was McMaster's chief spokesperson and primary contact for cabinet agency directors and public information officers looking for media relations guidance.

He also led crisis communications during natural disasters (hurricanes and floods) and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jim Hodges, ex-SC governor and MWC president, called Symmes "a skilled communicator and problem solver."

MWC's SC office is in Columbia.

## STANTON HANDLES DEAL FOR DIVERSEY

[Stanton](#) is handling the deal for Diversey as the Bain Capital-backed hygiene, infection prevention and cleaning products company "goes private" following a \$4.6B merger with Solenis special chemical producer.



Phil Wieland, Diversey CEO, said the merger is an opportunity "to create a more diversified business."

The combined company "will provide a number of attractive cross-selling opportunities, including meeting increasing customer demand for water management, cleaning and hygiene solutions," he added.

Diversey shareholders will receive \$8.40 in cash for their shares. That represents a 41 percent premium over the March 7 closing stock price.

Stanton's Charlyn Lusk and Scott Lessne are working the deal.

## DELAURO AIDE MOVES TO CORNERSTONE

Cornerstone Government Affairs has added Robin Juliano, who was a top aide to Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, to its federal team.



**Robin Juliano**

Juliano held the clerk and staff director slot on the Appropriations Committee, where DeLauro ranked as the top Democrat.

She advised on outreach strategy, policy, legislation and helped guide spending various bills, including assistance to Ukraine and US communities recovering from natural disasters.

Juliano also was lead staff negotiator for the House Democratic Caucus with the Senate and Biden administration.

Earlier, she served in the White House as policy advisor on the President's National Economic Council and in the Senate's Appropriations Committee.

## ON THE MOVE

[MP&F Strategic Communications](#) hires Amazon's **Neysa Taylor** as VP. Taylor was most recently a senior communications manager at Amazon. She has also served as director of communications for the Tennessee Department of Corrections and assignment manager at Nashville's WTVF NewsChannel 5. MP&F managing partner Jennifer Brantley said that Taylor "brings experience working in government and for some of the biggest brands in the nation to our team." MP&F has also promoted **Jessica Darden** and **Stacy Alcalá** to vice president.



**Neysa Taylor**

**VideoAmp**, an advertising platform, names **Jenny Wall** CMO, a newly created role at the company. Wall most recently served as CMO at Nickelodeon, and she previously held senior marketing positions at Gimlet Media, Hulu, Netflix and HBO. In her new position, Wall will oversee VideoAmp's brand and marketing strategy. "Jenny is an incredible fit for the position because she brings the perspective of both media buyers and sellers," said VideoAmp founder and CEO Ross McCray.

**Atrium**, a workforce management and talent solutions company, hires **Brad Martin** as chief marketing officer. Martin comes to the company from ZERO Systems, where he also served as CMO. He was previously executive VP of global marketing and chief content officer at PRO Unlimited (now Magnit), and held numerous roles at Beeline and Adecco Group. At Atrium, Martin will lead the global marketing strategy and organization across all marketing disciplines.

**Medifast**, which offers a range of health and wellness focused products and services, names **Steven Zenker** as vice president of investor relations. Zenker comes to the company from Sinclair Broadcast Group, where he also served as senior VP, investor relations. Reporting to Medifast CFO Jim Maloney, he will lead the strategy and continued implementation of the company's investor relations program.

**MAD Global Strategy** brings on former New York Governor **David Paterson** as a member of its advisory board. After serving as governor, Paterson was chairman of the New York State Democratic Party and a member of the MTA Board. He currently serves as senior vice president and senior advisor to Las Vegas Sands Corp. and will remain there while serving on the advisory board of MAD Global.



**David Paterson**

**Bojangles**, a Charlotte, NC-based restaurant chain with approximately 800 company-owned and franchised locations, names **Tom Boland** as CMO. Boland joins the company from Barstool Sports, where he served as vice president of marketing. He was previously VP of social strategy at WarnerMedia and held leadership positions at Turner Broadcasting and World Wrestling Entertainment, as well as Ogilvy and Digitas. At Bojangles, Boland will oversee all integrated marketing, media planning and creative partnerships.

## COMMENTARY



**Tucker Carlson**

**Welcome to Tucker’s Tea Party...** Don’t believe what your eyes saw or what your ears heard. That was Tucker Carlson’s message to the viewers of his March 6 program that featured highly sanitized clips of the Jan. 6 Capitol Hill riot.

The Swanson frozen foods heir called the insurrectionists “sightseers” who were being escorted through the building by Capitol

Hill police. They were “mostly peaceful and meek with a small percent that was violent.”

By presenting this world of alternative reality, Tucker shows he has complete disdain for the intelligence of his audience.

Nine people died, including four police officers by suicide, because of the five-hour struggle with a mob estimated to be in the 10K range.

NBC News reported that about 140 police officers were assaulted by Tucker’s meek sightseers.

Sixty of the sightseers pleaded guilty to assaulting law enforcement officers, 106 of those attacks were with deadly or dangerous weapons.

New York Senator Chuck Schumer called Carlson’s program one of the most shameful hours we have ever seen on cable television. The Majority Leader said he’s never seen a prime-time cable TV personality attempt to manipulate his viewers the way the Carlson did.

But Tucker doesn’t operate in the fact-based world. His mission is to keep spinning his audience, so it doesn’t defect to Newsmax. Shameless Tucker will go as low as it takes.

**Spineless Speaker of the House skips the Big Show.** California Congressman Kevin McCarthy is the guy who gave Carlson thousands of hours of footage of the Capitol Hill carnage in what he claims was in the spirit of transparency.

He wanted the public to view Carlson’s show so they could make up their minds about what happened on Jan. 6.

There’s no argument about what happened on Jan. 6, 2021. It was carnage and chaos.

What did McCarthy, who sold his soul to the right wing of the GOP, expect Carlson to air?

He certainly wasn’t going to focus on the almost 1,000 people who have been charged with crimes for their actions.

The kicker: McCarthy claims he didn’t watch Carlson’s show. He lit the fire and then fled the scene of the inferno.

**Time for a rebrand at Fox News.** Media Matters for America on March 3 filed a complaint with the FEC against Fox Corp. for making an illegal corporate contribution to Donald Trump’s campaign.

That followed news that Fox chairman Rupert Murdoch provided the Make America Great Again PAC information about then-presidential candidate Joe Biden’s advertising schedule through a “private, and secret direct communication.

“This distribution is diametrically opposed to Fox Corp.’s

regular press activity,” says the complaint. “Murdoch’s secret conveyance of the Biden advertisement is even less like press activity than a cable casting company sending campaign flyers in its bills, and neither can be protected by the press exemption.”

**What drug chains will follow Walgreens’ cave-in...**

Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal has fired off letters to the CEOs of CVS, Walmart, Kroger, Rite Aid, Albertsons and Costco seeking assurances that they will not follow Walgreens “cowardly decision” to not offer the mifepristone abortion medication in 21 states.

He said Walgreens “capitulated to Republican attorneys general.” In deciding to put profits over people, Walgreens “is succumbing to bullying and intimidation by hard right ideologues, saying, ‘you win, women lose,’” wrote Blumenthal.

The Democrat wrote that “during this moment of crisis for access to reproductive rights, healthcare providers, such as your company, should be using every tool at its disposal to assure everyone access to care no matter where they live.”

On March 9, he joined 48 Senate Democrats in support of the Women’s Health Protection Act to guarantee access to abortion throughout the country.

**FT loves ESG.** The *Financial Times* ran an editorial on March 7 that supported Joe Biden’s expected first veto to preserve a rule allowing fiduciaries of private investment funds to include environmental, social and governance considerations in their investment decisions.

The Republican “woke capitalism” crowd has barred state fund managers from taking ESG factors into consideration.

The FT notes the Biden rule permits, but does not compel, managers to take ESG into account.

“And asset managers increasingly realize that earning the best returns and avoiding losses, means considering all risks and externalities related to any investment,” according to the FT’s editorial board. “Company values can be affected by more than just financial performance.”

Financial PR firms should rejoice at the FT’s position.

**Earthquake relief for Turkey and Syria.** US Chamber of Commerce Foundation tracks \$110M in corporate donations of cash and services to benefit victims of the earthquakes that rocked Turkey and Syria.

The Moderna Charitable Foundation has committed \$1M to the International Medical Corp. to help both nations.

PepsiCo is providing shelter for employees and their families in Turkey and Syria and donating \$1.2M to local relief groups.

Meta has partnered with the Turkish Red Crescent to amplify campaigns promoting the blood donation tool on Facebook and with the Turkish AKUT rescue operation for an information helpline on WhatsApp.

The PwC Charitable Foundation is giving \$300K to CARA and Project HOPE to help those impacted by the disasters.

The CoC has a [corporate aid tracker submission form](#) where companies can highlight their relief efforts. —Kevin McCauley