

## Build Newsroom Relationships Effectively

by Christine Reichley Jacobs, APR, Zeppos & Associates, Inc.

The technologies used in television, print and radio newsrooms may have changed in the last decade, but many aspects of a public relations professional's role remain the same, the PRSA chapter was reminded at a meeting earlier this year.

It continues to be important to build relationships with reporters, to target story or photo ideas to the appropriate medium, and to make the story or photo relevant, a panel of media representatives said. Panel members were Bob Clinkingbeard, vice president and news director of FOX 6; Marge Pitrof, news director at WUWM; and Sherman Williams, photo editor of *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

Building relationships is key for Clinkingbeard, who suggested that PR professionals should talk to reporters when "you don't have anything to sell." It is helpful to cultivate reporters as sources and to think of them as repeat clients, he stressed.

Pitrof suggested that public relations professionals meet with reporters to share information and to find out what they can do to help reporters.

Both Clinkingbeard and Pitrof noted that they are always looking for experts from private industry to address current issues.

Williams told the PRSA audience that *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* photographs should connect readers to real events, provide images that people can relate to, trigger emotions, and represent fairly and accurately what happened.

Pitrof said she looked for "scenes" in radio that will tell a story and help people use their imaginations. She added that she often used descriptive language if no other sounds are available. And she seeks diverse perspectives, often interviewing people with drastically different viewpoints on a subject.

As important as it is to pitch meaningful stories to reporters, it is important, too, to

target them to the appropriate medium. Clinkingbeard reminded PRSA members that some story ideas are better told on television rather than on the radio or in print. PR representatives, he suggested, should review a story's relevance to different media before pitching the stories.

Making sure information is timely and is distributed sufficiently in advance of the event are both important to newsrooms. Radio station WUWM prefers to receive story ideas one to two weeks ahead. *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* wants ideas for photos at least one to two days in advance. Williams recommends pitching both a reporter and the photo desk if PR people think it is a possibility for both. He also reminded the audience that the *Journal Sentinel* does not take staged photos. ●

## Sponsorship is a Delicate Art, Not Just Promotion

by Megan Stencel, Zeppos & Associates, Inc.

Whether you are attending a festival, running in a race or attending a play, sponsors often play a prominent part in the event.

Shelly Taxman and Therese Fennelly, of the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, made that point at the February PRSA meeting. Sponsorship, they said, is not advertising. Sponsorship promotes the company in association with the sponsored organization or event; it is not for the direct promotion of a company through air time bought for that specific purpose.

Taxman noted that companies sponsor for various reasons, including visibility and to help shape consumer attitudes, provide funding and revenue, and to communicate commitment to a particular lifestyle. One example she touched on was the Miller Lite Ride for the Arts, one of the largest recreational bike rides in the United States, which raises money for the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF). Miller Brewing Company and UPAF have established a relationship built on a mutual value – another reason why companies sponsor events.

Other examples of sponsorship, the Marcus Center officials said, include the Firststar Fourth of July Fireworks, race car sponsors and Midwest Express sponsorship of Rainbow Summer.

Taxman also touched on the components of sponsorship. Research is one of the most crucial steps, because it is where the mission is identified, as well as survey results, audience, attendance and past sponsorships/relationships to the event or property. Research also is needed when matching companies and categories. This is where one taps various resources, talks with clients and learns the financial parameters of other sponsorship opportunities.

After the research is completed and a company chooses a potential sponsor, the proposal then is executed. Taxman's advice is to make sure the proposal looks professional and features a quick-read fact sheet and description of the sponsorship levels.

"One must be creative when describing the sponsorship," Fennelly said "Be sure to recognize what the company is looking for and stress the added value you will bring to the organization."

Solicitation is where both the potential sponsor and the organization or event to be sponsored meet to give an overview of the event or program. Here, the sponsorship opportunities are introduced as well as their key selling points. Listening is crucial when addressing the sponsor's objectives. It's also important to expand on selling points that fit their needs.

The proposal could be accepted, or rejected, in which case one goes back to researching other opportunities. If the proposal is accepted, Fennelly stressed the importance of generating your own contract. Don't assume anything. Define what you are selling, restate all agreed upon areas in the proposal, decide on an appropriate timeline, and obtain signatures from both the sponsors and the organization/event to be sponsored.

The next four steps – pre-event, event, post-event and stewardship – are vital.

Communication is essential in the pre-event stage because input and approval for sponsor identification are needed for all materials. It is important, too, to inform the sponsor of the expectations and involvement in the event planning, and also provide the sponsor with any promotional items or speaker instructions

and scripts before the event.

Staffing and effective communication also are crucial to assure that the sponsor gets what was promised. Sponsors should be satisfied with recognition, signage, sampling, VIP treatment and overall visibility.

In the post-event stage, it is appropriate to acknowledge the sponsor(s) with a letter, plaque or reception for their efforts. An evaluation also is recommended, which could include newspaper articles, photos, survey results, a video and checklist of what the sponsor received.

"Continuing an ongoing relationship is vital because the sponsor feels appreciated," Fennelly added. "Whether it's sending them a Christmas card or inviting them to a special event, it's nice to keep in touch year-round." ●

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**APRIL 18**

State Fair Crisis Communications

**MAY 16**

Paragon Awards

Check the Chapter's Information Line (414-297-9491) or Web site ([www.prsawis.org](http://www.prsawis.org)) for up-to-date information on these and future programs. And don't forget that you can register online through the chapter Web site, using your credit card.

## SPREAD THE WORD

If you have news or information to share with fellow PRSA members, let them read it in ...*innercom*.

Contact Ray Scroggins at Scroggins Associates, Ltd., P.O. Box 662, Watertown, WI 53094-0662. Telephone (920) 261-7968 Fax (920) 261-7986 E-mail: [rscrogg@execpc.com](mailto:rscrogg@execpc.com)

**NOTE:** If your company affiliation, address, e-mail or telephone changes, notify Brookfield Executive at 225 Regency Court, Suite 200, Brookfield, WI 53045-6166 to be sure your directory listing remains up-to-date.

## 2001 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### Accreditation and Maintenance

John Luecke, APR  
(414) 774-2184  
[jrluecke@aol.com](mailto:jrluecke@aol.com)

Ann Peru Knabe, APR  
(262) 467-9168  
[WisPRgal@starband.net](mailto:WisPRgal@starband.net)

### Bylaws

Evan Bane, APR  
(262) 334-5521 x241  
[ebane@ziegler.com](mailto:ebane@ziegler.com)

### Community Service

Laura Neuser  
(262) 796-2220  
[lauran@mcglin.com](mailto:lauran@mcglin.com)

### Cultural Diversity

Evan Zeppos, APR  
(414) 276-6237  
[ezeppos@zeppos.com](mailto:ezeppos@zeppos.com)

### Employment (Job Bank)

Mindy Farrar  
(414) 276-6237  
[mfarrar@zeppos.com](mailto:mfarrar@zeppos.com)

### Hospitality

Maria Dendromiris  
(414) 319-5700  
[mariadendromiris@zizzogroup.com](mailto:mariadendromiris@zizzogroup.com)

### Membership

Jerry Topczewski, APR  
(414) 769-3517  
[topczewskij@archmil.org](mailto:topczewskij@archmil.org)

### Media/Public Relations

Alan Gaudynski, APR  
(262) 796-8525  
[gaudynski@pitnet.net](mailto:gaudynski@pitnet.net)

### Newsletter

Ray Scroggins, APR  
(920) 261-7968  
[rscrogg@execpc.com](mailto:rscrogg@execpc.com)

### Paragon Awards

Eric Vallee  
(414) 271-9999  
[evallee@heart.org](mailto:evallee@heart.org)

### Professional Development

Rosemary Murphy, APR  
(262) 782-9850  
[rmurphy@ssnd-milw.org](mailto:rmurphy@ssnd-milw.org)

### Programs

Paul Daniel, APR  
(414) 271-7885 Ext.145  
[paul@laackeandjoys.com](mailto:paul@laackeandjoys.com)

### Student Chapter Liaison

Lauren Herb  
(414) 423-0045  
[herbcommunications@yahoo.com](mailto:herbcommunications@yahoo.com)

### Web Site

Leslie Bonk, APR  
(262) 789-1565  
[leslie.l.bonk@bmpr.com](mailto:leslie.l.bonk@bmpr.com)

### 50th Anniversary

Mike Pflughoeft, APR  
(920) 893-4975  
[mikeyp@execpc.com](mailto:mikeyp@execpc.com)

## NEWEST APR

Congratulations to the chapter's newly accredited member, **Brenna Kriviskey, APR**, of Zeppos & Associates, Inc., who recently passed the APR exam. ●

## NEW CHAPTER MEMBERS

Please welcome these following new members: **Carol Lynn Lambert**, PR and community affairs manager, BTIO Educational Products, Inc. (Eau Claire); **Timothy M. Olsen**, community development coordinator, Wisconsin Donor Network; and **Laura M. Tanin**, director-marketing, Schlitz Audubon Nature Center. ●

## NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

**Lisa Rieb Shea**, formerly with Bowling, Inc., has joined Hunter Business Group as marketing communications specialist. **Fay Spano** now is account supervisor in the Public Relations Group of

BVK/McDonald. She previously had been with Bader Rutter.

**Vanessa Welter**, director of PR and communications for the GMCVB, has been named to the PRSA Travel and Tourism Board of Directors. ●

## A NEW DELIVERY SYSTEM?

The chapter is looking into the feasibility of delivering *innercom* via e-mail. The format probably would be .pdf, which is readable by Adobe Acrobat Reader, a free program. If you have an opinion in favor of e-mail or conventional mail, please send it by your favorite method to Ray Scroggins, [rscrogg@execpc.com](mailto:rscrogg@execpc.com), or Scroggins Associates, Ltd., P.O. Box 662, Watertown, WI 53094. ●

## NEW PRSA PRESIDENT

**Catherine A. Bolton** has been named president and chief operating officer of the National PRSA, replacing Ray Gaulke, who

is now a consultant to PRSA and other organizations. Bolton joined PRSA in September as chief public relations officer. Previously, she had been vice president of communication at the International Copper Association, Ltd., and earlier held several administrative and communications positions with various other organizations. PRSA currently has 116 chapters and about 19,000 members. ●

## PRSA JOB LINE

The PRSA Job Line is a free service to employers and PRSA members seeking employment. The service costs \$35 annually for non-members.

If you are an employer interested in having an opening posted, please fax a detailed job description to the attention of Mindy Farrar at 414-276-2322. She will photo/copy your posting and send it to everyone (approximately 80 people, with a

range of experience levels) on the Job Bank mailing list. Mailings are sent at noon on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month.

If you are seeking employment, please call Mindy at 414-276-6237 and give your name and address to receive these job listings. ●

## PRSA...innercom

Ray I. Scroggins, APR, Editor

The PRSA...innercom is the official publication of the Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America and is published six times per year. Editorial offices are at Scroggins Associates, Ltd., 600 E. Main Street, P.O. Box 662, Watertown, WI 53094-0662. Permission is given to reprint material providing credit is given to the PRSA...innercom.

For change of address: Send a notice to PRSA...innercom, 225 Regency Court, Suite 200, Brookfield, WI 53045-6166.



**Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter  
225 Regency Court, Suite 200  
Brookfield, WI 53045-6166**