



Vegas PR News

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In This Issue...

October Luncheon

October Networking Mixer

Pinnacle Awards is Nov. 2

New Members

Chapter Elections Coming Soon

Favorite Luncheon Presenter

APR Study Session

Job Bank

Chapter Q&A

The President's report

October luncheon seminar

Getting comfortable: Learning how to communicate with the GLBT Community

Join us at our next luncheon seminar on Friday, **Oct. 20** where we'll learn more about the valley's growing gay and lesbian community. With many national companies recognizing and catering to the significant purchasing power of this community, the GLBT community has become a critical audience for many marketing plans, especially for the travel and tourism industries.

What about the local community? Are there clearly defined issues of concern mobilizing gays and lesbians of which public relations professionals should be aware? What are the best ways to reach these audiences and what topics are of particular interest? What are the protocols and best practices for sharing information and soliciting participation from this audience?

Our panel of local experts will include:

- Chris Campbell, General Manager and Managing Editor of Stonewall Publishing Inc.
- James Healey, Executive Director of Housekeeping/EVS/Wardrobe, New York New York Hotel & Casino and corporate diversity liaison to the LGBT community

The luncheon will be held at Lawry's The Prime Rib, 4043 Howard Hughes Pkwy. Networking begins at 11:30 a.m. with lunch served by noon. The presentation will begin shortly thereafter and conclude at 1 p.m.

The cost is \$28 for PRSA/PRSSA members before noon on Tuesday, Oct. 17; \$33 for non-members before the deadline; \$35 after the deadline for members and non-members, and at the door. Register online at prsalasvegas.com. Cash, check and credit cards are accepted at the door. This is one of the largest luncheons of the year, so don't miss it.

October Networking Mixer at Applebee's

The Las Vegas Valley Chapter of PRSA welcomes all PRSA members and guests on Tuesday, **Oct. 17** at a free social networking event hosted by the friendly folks at **Applebee's**. Join us for good friends and great food and meet the candidates for the 2007 PRSA – Las Vegas Valley Chapter Board. For event details and to RSVP, please visit www.prsalasvegas.com.

10th Annual PRSA Pinnacle Awards are Nov. 2

The 10th annual PRSA-Las Vegas Valley Chapter Pinnacle Awards ceremony will take place Thursday, **Nov. 2**, at the **Golden Nugget Hotel and Casino** in downtown Las Vegas. The evening will begin at 6 p.m. with a cocktail reception, with the dinner and awards ceremony beginning at 7 p.m. The evening also will include a no-host bar and silent auction, with proceeds benefiting the Chapter's scholarship program.

Paula Francis and Gary Waddell of KLAS-TV Channel 8 will co-host the event, with Vince Alberta, vice president of public affairs for the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, presenting our keynote address.

Invitations are coming your way soon! If you'd like to register to attend using the new online feature, visit PRSAPinnacleAwards.com and click on the [event details](#) link.

There's still time for individuals and organizations to donate items to the Chapter's silent auction to help support its public relations student scholarship program. If you're interested, please contact Cheryl Persinger at pac@prsalasvegas.com.

During the week of Oct. 9, winners will be notified by mail that they will be honored for an entry. Results will be unveiled during the Nov. 2 ceremony when Paula and Gary will present the Pinnacle Awards, Awards of Excellence, Awards of Merit, Newcomer of the Year Award, Principal of the Year Award, and Best of Show – Tools and Techniques and Best of Show – Public Relations Programs. It should be an exciting evening!

For questions, please contact Diane Gibes, Pinnacle Awards chairperson, at dgibes@brown-partners.com.

New members

Welcome to PRSA—Las Vegas Valley Chapter

Dawn Ledgrer Barraclough

Public Relations Specialist
Las Vegas Springs Preserve

Robert Benson

Director, Marketing & Public Relations
American Nevada Company

Kirsten L. Kellogg

Public Relations Specialist
National Security Technology, LLC

For membership information, visit prsa.org or contact Lori Bachand at lori.bachand@unlv.edu.

Watch your mailboxes

Chapter elections coming soon

Later this month, chapter members will be asked to weigh in on the slate of officers for the 2007 Board of Directors. The candidates include:

- President: **Nancy Syzdek, APR**
- President-Elect: **Lori Bachand, APR**
- Past President/Assembly Delegate: **Tom Bradley**
- Immediate Past President/Assembly Delegate: **Pete Codella, APR**
- Vice President of Finance: **Amy Brooks**
- Vice President of Membership: **Shaun Sewell**
- Vice President of Professional Development: **Diane Gibes**
- Vice President of Administration: **Craig Ruark**
- Internet Chair: **TBD**
- Job Bank Chair: **Shannon Hiller**
- Pinnacle Awards Chair: **Sonya Ruffin, APR**
- Ethics Chair: **Dawn Merritt, APR**
- APR Chairs: **TBD**

Join us at the Membership Mixer on Tuesday, **Oct. 17** where you can meet and mingle with many of the candidates. If you can't make it, we'll be posting brief candidate bios and candidate statements as a part of the ballot so you can learn more them before you cast your vote.

Please note that our chapter bylaws require that 50 percent plus one of our members vote in the election. Once you've voted, please make sure that any other chapter members in your organization have also voted. Timely approval of the slate is critical for our chapter to smoothly transition between boards and begin planning for a great 2007.

Pick your favorite luncheon presenter

We've had a great batch of speakers at this year's luncheon seminars. Help us reward the best of the best at the 2006 Pinnacle Awards by voting for your favorite speaker or panel. Please [vote](#) by **Oct. 20** so we can have plenty of time to invite the winner to join us for a great evening.

Study sessions for APR starting Oct. 12

If you've ever even briefly considered sitting for the APR exam, now is the time to get started. A series of nine study sessions will begin on Thursday, **Oct. 12** for all APR candidates. But even if you're not planning to sit for the exam, you are invited to join one or more of the sessions to brush up on a specific topic or add your expertise to the discussions.

The study sessions will be held primarily on Thursday evenings, with the first session starting on Oct. 12 at 6 p.m. at Craig Ruark's office at Nevada by Design, 3515 E. Harmon Ave. (Harmon is between Flamingo and Tropicana, office is one-quarter block east of Pecos. Look for four buildings with blue tile roofs; 3515 is in the southeast corner.)

The study program will run for nine weeks (skipping Thanksgiving) with the last session scheduled for **Dec. 14**. The session originally slated for Thursday, Nov. 2, will be rescheduled as it conflicts with the Pinnacle Awards. If a facilitator's schedule requires doing a session on an evening other than a Thursday, we will be flexible to accommodate those changes.

Each evening's discussion will focus on one of the ten competencies that will be covered in the written exam (we've grouped "communications models and theories with advanced communication skills" to give us nine weeks instead of ten). Each session will have a facilitator and will last approximately one hour and fifteen minutes.

Everyone is encouraged to purchase the same text, *Effective Public Relations (9th edition)* by Scott M. Cutlip, Allen H. Center and Glen M. Broom. It can be purchased on Amazon for \$95.71 new or approximately \$85 used. These prices represent fairly good discounts off the list price of \$113.35. Having the same book will allow all of you to read the same texts and be similarly prepared for each session.

The first session will feature Roger Buehrer, APR, and PRSA-Las Vegas Valley Chapter Ethics Chair Catherine Levy, who will lead the discussion on "Ethics and Law." From 6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. the first night, we will agree on a schedule for discussion topics and take care of any housekeeping chores. Roger and Catherine will begin the discussion at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Please call Debby Ackerman, APR, at **229-6581** or Gael Hancock, APR at **614-5320** with questions or suggestions and to RSVP by **Oct. 9**.

Find a job on the PRSA Las Vegas Job Bank

Members and nonmembers alike can find the latest job postings on the PRSA Las Vegas Job Bank. Members access the job bank for free, and nonmembers pay an access fee of \$20 every six months. Check out the [job bank page](#) on our Web site for all the details.

Chapter Q & A

Q: I've just taken over public relations duties at my job. It's not my background or expertise. Can PRSA help me make the shift?

A: Las Vegas is a great place for on-the-job PR training. There are a number of educational opportunities available through the chapter, including:

- On-site seminars
- Teleseminars
- Industry news and articles

PRSA members enjoy a substantial discount on nationally and locally produced seminars and teleseminar offerings. In addition, our members receive two award-winning publications in their mailboxes with enlightening articles on best practices and industry trends.

In addition to PRSA's programs, UNLV's Division of Education Outreach offers a Certificate in Public Relations Skills. The program includes classes taught by local professionals that can help you build your research, public speaking, writing, and strategic planning skills. With most of the classes offered in the evenings and with a price tags ranging from \$95 to \$235, it's a convenient and cost-effective way to balance your on-the job experience with some practical classroom training.

Is there something you want to know about the chapter or the Vegas PR community? Please send your questions to president@prsalasvegas.com. We'll select a question and provide a response in Vegas PR News to answer some of the common questions asked of Board members. Identities will be kept anonymous unless otherwise requested.

The President's report

We in public relations have been called many things – hacks, flacks and spin doctors being some of the gentler defamations. We've also been called liars, cheats and thieves, or words to that effect.

Even to our faces.

Some of the more venomous barbs directed at the PR profession through the years have come from journalists. PR and journalism have long had a love/hate relationship; no need to delve into that dichotomy here, as we all have lived it. Many of us from both sides of the fence. Still, it never ceases to amaze me how reporters and PR pros continue to lob salvos at each other, sometimes publicly, in spite of the intrinsically intertwined nature of our professions.

Author Barbara Ehrenreich in her book "Bait and Switch" condescendingly referred to PR as "journalism's evil twin." She went on to opine, "Whereas a journalist seeks the truth, a PR person may be called upon to disguise it or even to advance an untruth."

First, let's address this notion that journalists somehow are society's tireless guardians and progenitors of the truth. This is a tidy, romanticized notion, especially for those Fourth Estaters who still genuflect to Woodward and Bernstein

but gloss over the sins of Jayson Blair, Janet Cooke, Stephen Dunphy, Tim Ryan and myriad other ethically-challenged journalists guilty of plagiarism and bald-faced fabrication.

Journalism's track record for honesty and integrity is far from pristine, and thus should not be elevated above similarly contemptible examples of dishonest and questionable tactics used by some self-proclaimed PR professionals. Such prevaricators are equally loathsome. Still, that is no reason to paint either practice with a broad brush of disdain and scorn. I doubt that a seasoned PR pro speaking at a gathering of journalists would refer to them as creative writers and plagiarizing frauds. Neither should a thinking journalist possessing even a smidge of common sense engage in such inflammatory generalizations to an audience of PR professionals. We do rely on one another, after all, despite our often mutual cynicism.

Certainly there are journalists who are sincere in their craft and in their desire to relate the news truthfully in as many inches as their editors will allow, even at big city dailies. The same holds true for a proportionate number of PR professionals, who strive to present information to the media and the public in as forthright and ethical a manner as possible.

As for the tired accusation that we are merely "spin doctors," I challenge you to read any article in any newspaper from anywhere in the country that is not tainted by the reporter's own beliefs and values. How an article is structured, which words are used and where, which quotes are used—not to mention the headline (often written by an editor) and the article's news peg itself—can betray a journalist's supposed commitment to unbiased reporting. In reality, the "truth" we see in print many times is merely a "spun" version of the truth that the reporter and his or her editor wants us to see. Contrast that with the number of press releases, those tools of our trade presumably dripping with lies and deceit, which are seen by the public on a daily basis. Now do the math.

Last time I looked, journalists ranked somewhere around or below politicians and used-car salesmen on the public's "trust meter." PR professionals weren't much higher. Still, that does not mean either profession is comprised solely of equivocating scoundrels. The taint of shame is indiscriminate, but I like to believe the majority of professionals on both sides are above-board and scrupulous. In that respect, PR is not so much journalism's "evil twin" as it is its doppelganger. And you can spin that any way you want.

~ Tom Bradley Jr.
PRSA-Las Vegas Valley Chapter President
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