

# KALEIDOSCOPE

EXPLORING THE MANY FACETS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Fall/Winter 2000



## Preparation Makes the Difference

by Anne Sceia Klein, Fellow PRSA

The recent presidential debates illustrated the importance and effectiveness of thorough preparation for a presentation. Both George Bush and Al Gore rehearsed extensively for each debate. The performance ratings demonstrate once again that a carefully prepared spokesperson is a successful spokesperson.

Both George Bush and Al Gore understood the need to condense their core messages into sound bites, and to repeat those messages over and over. But preparation involves more than just coming up with some clever sound bites and slick answers. Preparation involves thinking carefully about your overall position or philosophy, then crystalizing that into a handful of core key messages that convey the essence of that position or philosophy in a coherent and logically consistent way. It means identifying the talking points – the additional details – that explain and elaborate on your key messages. It also means practicing.

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## Awards

### FRANK LONG HONORED AT JASPER AWARDS

Anne Klein & Associates Senior Counselor Frank X. Long, who passed away in July, has been honored as “Communicator of the Year” by the Jersey Shore Public Relations and Advertising Association. Anne Klein presented the posthumous award to Frank’s son, Kevin Long, at the 2000 Jasper Awards ceremonies held in November. Frank was cited for his long and distinguished career in public relations, and for his years of service to the JSPRAA.

Also at the awards ceremonies, Anne Klein & Associates received a Silver Jasper award for a program that was never actually implemented. The program, called “Street of Stars,” was honored in the “Stroke of Genius” category, which recognizes outstanding programs that, for one reason or another, “never made it past the drawing board.”



Anne Klein honors Frank Long at the 2000 Jasper Awards ceremonies.

The Street of Stars program was originally commissioned by an AKA client as a way to honor Philadelphia’s great athletes by creating a walk of special plaques, similar to the world-famous Walk of Fame in Hollywood. Before the program could be implemented, however, the client had a budget cutback and the program was abandoned.

### JERRY KLEIN BECOMES PINNACLE CHAIRMAN



Incoming president Henry de La Garza of Houston congratulates Jerry Klein on becoming chairman of Pinnacle Worldwide.

After a two-year term as president of Pinnacle Worldwide, Jerry Klein handed the gavel over to his successor, Henry de La Garza of Houston, Texas, at Pinnacle’s Fall meeting in Toronto. de La Garza noted that one of Jerry’s major accomplishments as president was guiding the evolution of Pinnacle into a more globally inclusive and representative institution, strategically positioned as a worldwide network. As he begins his two-year term as chairman, Jerry plans to remain actively involved in supporting Pinnacle’s goals. Pinnacle consists of 60 leading independent PR firms throughout the world.

## ANNE QUOTED BY ASSOCIATED PRESS AND OTHERS

The Associated Press recently sought out Anne's opinion on the public relations implications of the Firestone tire recall and a Ford vehicle recall. Quoting her in two separate articles, the AP identified Anne as a crisis management expert and corporate image consultant.

Earlier, Anne was interviewed by Philadelphia's all-news radio station for comments on the handling of former President Ford's medical problems during the Republican National Convention. Also in the last few months, Anne has been quoted in public relations trade publications *PR Week* and Ragan Communications' *PR Intelligence*, and in articles on Onvia.com, a Web site for small businesses, and in Career Explorer, a resource for students in the U.S. and Canada.

### AKA STARTS THE SEASON OF GIVING

Many years ago, AKA staff members decided that, instead of giving each other gifts during the holiday season, they would arrange with a local charitable organization to "adopt" a family in need. The shopping for and wrapping of gifts

brings staffers together while providing a true sense of the season.

Not that staff members are left out all together in the exchange of gifts. AKA's annual "Tacky Santa" party is expected to be as uproarious this year as ever. Everyone brings in the most hideous gift item they can find around the house or in the attic. We each draw numbers and, as the beautifully wrapped but tremendously tacky gifts are unwrapped, the groans and bartering begin. Last year's winner of the ATP (As Tacky as Possible) award was a gyrating Elvis telephone (below) complete with a gold lamé jump suit.



*AKA staff members and family joined in a round of miniature golf and other amusements during the firm's annual summer outing in August.*



*Sandra Gibbs Horne reacts to her tacky holiday present.*

### ANNE AND JERRY AUTHOR ARTICLE FOR THE ABA

The American Bar Association's Section on Natural Resources, Energy & Environmental Law invited Anne and Jerry to co-author an article for its publication, *Trends*. The article, titled "A Crisis Should Not Come as a Surprise," advises environmental attorneys on how they should help their clients plan for and handle communications for an environmental crisis.

## Client News

The **National Association of Investors Corporation (NAIC)**, an AKA client for 18 years, is enjoying media coverage that is better than ever. Recently, the



*Fred McCaffrey (left) and Marisa Sharkey (right) of AKA spend some time with Ken Janke, president and CEO of the National Association of Investors Corporation, during NAIC's 2000 Congress held this summer in Philadelphia.*

organization was featured in the AARP publication *Modern Maturity*, and in *Working Woman*. NAIC is also spotlighted in the book "Wow the Dow" and was included in stories promoting the book in *Time* magazine and *USA Today*. Most recently, AKA helped NAIC publicize the start of bookstore and newsstand sales of NAIC's monthly magazine, *Better Investing*. With a circulation of 450,000, *Better Investing* already ranks among the top ten financial magazines in the country. Until now, however, it has been available almost exclusively to NAIC members as part of their annual membership.

AKA handled media relations for the announcement of the **Russell Byers**

**Charter School**, now being established to honor the former Philadelphia *Daily News* columnist who was tragically murdered during a robbery attempt last year. Working with Laurada Byers, his widow, AKA helped generate the most extensive media coverage ever received in Philadelphia for an event of this kind. At least 20 broadcast "hits" aired on the local ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, WB and UPN television stations as well as the Comcast cable news program and *KYW Newsradio*. The event also was covered extensively by both Philadelphia daily newspapers and numerous prominent weeklies. The agency established the overall media strategy, provided media interview training, and got the media out to cover the colorful announcement event in Center City Philadelphia.

## AKA HELPS HEALTH INSURER MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

At the typical health insurance company, special programs and services frequently get cut if they are unprofitable. But Horizon Mercy is not your typical health insurance company. With a strong belief in the value of preventive healthcare, Horizon Mercy identifies the healthcare issues facing its members and then creates programs that will not only treat members, but will also educate them regarding preventive measures that can be taken in order to ensure that they stay healthy.

By reaching out to those who need additional help, Horizon Mercy is able to do what might seem impossible: reduce costs without cutting services. In doing so, the organization has become New Jersey's largest managed care program serving the publicly insured, providing healthcare services to 170,000 people in 21 New Jersey counties.

Horizon Mercy was founded in 1994 as a partnership between Horizon Healthcare of New Jersey, Inc., a subsidiary of Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield (HBCBS), and Mercy Health Plan, a subsidiary of the Mercy Health System of southeastern Pennsylvania.

Among Horizon Mercy's initiatives are its "Mom's GEMS" (Getting Early Maternity Services) prenatal program, an asthma prevention program and various community outreach programs.

This "doing what it takes" attitude is what has made Horizon Mercy so successful in its ability to provide

programs and services and still make a profit. "We make an initial investment in providing programs and services, and everyone reaps the benefits in the long run. Members end up needing less care because of the preventive measures they take as a result of education and our other services," says Leonard Johnson, director of marketing.

Because the managed care industry in general does not have a good reputation, Horizon Mercy wants to build awareness of how it differs from other managed care plans. Horizon Mercy called on Anne Klein & Associates to help increase public awareness of its programs and build on its positive reputation in order to

make it the healthcare plan of choice among the publicly insured.

AKA began by identifying key messages for Horizon Mercy to use in all its communications efforts. Basic press materials were needed, and AKA created a fact sheet, information sheets on various special programs, and biographical sketches of key executives. AKA then developed a targeted media list. An initial news release on the Mom's GEMS program and follow-up phone calls to targeted editors elicited interest and requests for additional information. Other media outreach programs have focused on healthy eating, flu prevention, staying in school, and reducing infant mortality.

AKA held several media training sessions to prepare Horizon Mercy executives for TV and radio interviews generated by the GEMS and other releases. AKA also has worked with Horizon Mercy to develop key messages and talking points on a variety of issues, such as the "Patients' Bill of Rights."

AKA is now working with marketing director Johnson on the 2001 communications plan that will incorporate the New Jersey FamilyCare program.



## Client News

**interState Net Bank**, seeking to position itself as the premier "business to business" Internet bank, has selected AKA to handle its public relations. Currently being organized, the Cherry Hill, N.J., based commercial bank is planning to be on line and open for business early next year serving small and medium-sized businesses in its initial target area of New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware.

AKA has been asked by **Methodist Hospital Nursing Center** in south Philadelphia to assist with projects to help develop a communications program targeted to its employees and the surrounding community. Respected in its field, this 12-year-old, 360-bed facility is working to change its culture and

philosophy to help make residents more independent and enhance their quality of life. One of AKA's first projects was helping plan and publicize the center's second annual Wine Making Festival, designed to help the residents, most of whom come from the surrounding, largely Italian-American, community reconnect with their family traditions.

AKA recently helped create a corporate brochure in five different languages for client **TransTechnology**, a leading international manufacturer of specialty fasteners. The brochure, which will be used for sales, marketing and investor relations purposes,

*(Continued on last page.)*



*AKA's Marisa Sharkey (second from right) joins Methodist Hospital Nursing Center administrator Michael Curry (right) and staff members Amanda Brown and Dominic Santamaria at the facility's second annual Wine Making Festival.*

## CLIENT NEWS

(Continued from third page.)

was printed in separate English, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese versions in order to reach all of TransTechnology's strategic markets in their native tongues.

The **Delaware Valley Healthcare Council** (DVHC) has selected AKA for public relations and strategic communications. DVHC is a membership association of more than 150 healthcare organizations in southeastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and northern Delaware.

AKA is providing ongoing media relations and producing a quarterly newsletter, *Life Care Lines*, for **Friends Life Care at Home**. The non-profit, non-denominational organization founded by the Religious Society of Friends provides programs that help senior citizens remain at home, even if their health should change. The organization serves Philadelphia and four suburban counties, as well as the Allentown/Bethlehem area and northern Delaware. Expansion is planned into Maryland and Washington, D.C.

## Preparation

(Continued from front page.)

When presenters try to "wing it," they are courting danger. Without proper preparation, the message is unfocused and the tough questions are not anticipated. That leads to off-the-cuff, poorly framed responses that can make the difference between success and failure.

If you want to score points for your organization or point of view, you need to prepare and practice. The more rehearsals you have, the more natural you will be. Those who refuse to practice, saying they're more relaxed when they speak spontaneously, are simply fooling themselves.

Not being prepared for a presentation – whether it's a presidential debate, a media interview, a speech or even just a casual presentation to a handful of business colleagues – is sure to result in a disappointment at the very least and a disaster at the very worst. *A.S.K.*

**Anne Klein & Associates** is a public relations consulting firm based in the Philadelphia region, with clients throughout the United States. It is a member of **Pinnacle Worldwide**, a network of leading independent public relations firms around the world.



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