MEETINGS

Next at IABC Fort Worth...

Awaiting the rebirth: website, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn.

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Next at Greater Fort Worth PRSA...

Go for the Gold: How to Get and Keep Your APR

Fifty years since its establishment, the Accredited in Public Relations credential remains the “gold standard.” Chapter leaders ask: Have you achieved it? If not, what’s holding you back?

In recognition of April as Accreditation Month, Dan McFadden, APR, the PRSA Southwest District’s APR committee chair, will explain the importance of the APR — what it means to a practitioner and how it can be achieved and maintained.

Greater Fort Worth PRSA has numerous successes on the accreditation front in the PRSA Southwest District. McFadden, a self-described “APR evangelist,” will discuss how Fort Worth and the district are excelling while other chapters struggle to get their APR programs off the ground.

McFadden has 30 years of experience in PR, broadcasting, marketing and new media. He is a past president of the Arkansas PRSA chapter, where he served nearly 10 years on its board. In 2010 he received the chapter’s Crystal Award for service to the community and the profession. As an assembly delegate he created the “APR Ready to Roll” program.

Time & date: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesday, April 8
Place: Colonial Country Club, 3735 Country Club Circle, Fort Worth (map)
Cost: chapter members $25, national members $30, nonmembers $35, students $20; walk-ups add $5
Registration has closed; walk-ups are welcomed

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Next at Fort Worth SPJ...

A night to shine: First Amendment Awards and Scholarship Dinner. RSVP by April 15.

STRAIGHT STUFF

The TCU Friends of Fine Arts and Friends of Communication Guild scholarship awards luncheon will be Wednesday, April 22, at the Dee J. Kelly Alumni and Visitors Center, 2820 Stadium Drive. More from Charlene Smith, 817 257-7232.

New York Times best-selling author Taylor Stevens revealed her journey into publishing, insights into the publishing industry and how to get your book on a book list at the next Writers’ Guild of Texas meeting, 7 p.m. Monday, April 20, at the Richardson Public Library. Stevens writes the acclaimed Vanessa Michael Munroe series and has been published in more than 20 languages and optioned for film by James Cameron’s production company, Lightstorm Entertainment. Her books are international boots-on-the-ground thrillers featuring a mercenary information hunter in a non-testosterone mix of Jason Bourne and Jack Reacher. More on the Writers’ Guild of Texas at writersguildoftexas.org.

IABC local update: Chris Vary, head of digital practice for Weber Shandwick Southwest, will front IABC Dallas’ “wildly popular” SXSW recap luncheon Tuesday, April 14, at The Clubs of Prestonwood.

PRSA local update: Roslyn Dawson Thompson, leader of the largest regional women’s fund in the world and a former agency executive supporting Fortune 50 companies, will examine “Principles to Propel You to Leadership” at the PRSA Dallas monthly luncheon Thursday, April 9, at Seasons 52 at NorthPark Center.

IABC has new website! IABC eChaser on p. 2

Each logo in the ad rail links to the sponsor’s website!
Thirty years ago this month, the Coca-Cola Co. sent a message in a bottle. The message was about New Coke, and it is one everyone should read, even today.

Most people know how vividly New Coke failed. Less known is how close it came to succeeding.

For years, Coke had been losing market share to arch-rival Pepsi. The only businesses. Pepsi, with dominated the all-important youth market. (I still think it would be cool if Wall Street traders referred to this as Coke belly futures.)

Simply put, Coke's prospects were flat. Company executives knew that a fresh product would dilute sales from established Coke, resulting in Pepsi becoming No. 1. The P company already claimed that more people

formula. It is important to note that Coke did not just pop the top on its new product: In extensive blind tests, tasters overwhelmingly liked the flavor of New Coke over both old Coke and Pepsi. But even this success posed replacing the old formula with the new. Instead, the tasters were asked if they would choose the product if it indeed was Coca-Cola. Here again, encouraging news bubbled up: Most said they'd be fine with it. A small number of tasters, fewer than 13 percent, said they would not, and many of these people felt quite strongly about it. But hey, how much trouble could one small group cause?

On April 23, 1985, New Coke was rolled (poured?) out to the public. But promised the media a major announcement for the following week, Pepsi pounced. The CEO announced a company-wide holiday, then bought a full-wars." Behind the scenes, the shrewd Pepsi PR team was feeding questions to the media.

When Coke CEO herald New Coke, he found himself in an awkward position. He could not admit that Pepsi was winning in taste tests. But how, after decades of telling something even more real? Remember, these were the days before

Even so, the product had a crisp start. Sales jumped 8 percent from the same period the year before, and the stock was up. Critically, 75 percent of the thirsty survey respondents said they would buy New Coke, preferably

Then came the Southern rebellion. The New Coke malcontents were a Atlanta headquarters are located. Suddenly, boycotts were being organized and bottles emptied in the streets. The Coke-heads' vitriol was noted (and no doubt agitated) by media coverage. The folks behind the Real Thing had Angry letters and phone calls bombarded Atlanta. A Texan spent more than $1,000 stocking up on old Coke, bottlers filed suit, and one irate citizen filed In other words, people were becoming upset because people were becoming upset. In Georgia an elderly woman reportedly attacked a New Coke deliveryman with her umbrella. And the guy who filed the class action suit had taken the taste test and actually preferred New Coke. These complained about the new drink. Just as troubling was worried about damaging his good reputation, announcing that he would no longer serve as pitchman. (Nostalgic pause as we remember a time when

And then it was over. Seventy-seven days after the New Coke announcement, the nation's long nightmare ended. On July 11, Coke said it was bringing back "Coca-Cola Classic." To break the story, ABC interrupted drooped in 2009, leaving us right where we started, except with much

Theories have been offered on why New Coke fizzled, and many hold some credibility. Most authors do not believe Coke planned the whole thing. After all, it spent thousands of dollars developing the new drink, and taste tests had been overwhelmingly positive.

It's easy to say this is one idea that should have been canned. But in 1985 Coke was stumbling, and the company needed to do something. This just formula for success can quickly turn into a recipe for disaster.