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for attendees and number of books; check or cash preferred.

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MEETINGS

Next at 10:30 a.m., Fort Worth Club. Tickets — members $85, nonmembers $100, students $35; parking in the garage $2.50.

Next at 12:30 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 3.

City Club of Fort Worth, 601 Commerce St. (map.

Register by Aug. 5. No meeting this month, but good times lie straight ahead.

STRAIGHT STUFF

Cost: members $30, nonmembers $35, students $20; walk-ups add $5; parking is on the second level of Gables Park 17. Ask for a parking pass and get $5 off admission. For more info, visit http://fortworthprsa.org.

Thursday, Aug. 18, at Seasons 52 at NorthPark Center (map. The ever-popular media panel — former journalist turned PR pro, moderating. Cockerell's first book, "A Private War." Cockerell will sell you a copy, then autograph it at three book signings — 2:30, 3:30 and 4:30 p.m. — Sunday, Aug. 21, at Cedar Springs Books.

Fellow PRSA, has been there, done that, and has tips for those considering PR as a career. She'll explain how to respond to a crisis involving issues of race at the PRSA Dallas monthly luncheon Thursday, Aug. 18, at Seasons 52 at NorthPark Center (map. PRSSA may join as an associate member. More from chapter president Liz Bobo.

PRSA local update III: Acclaimed SMU professor and industry news, extend your network while increasing your knowledge, sponsorships provide a great way to promote one's company, favorite ranking blogger, national media commentator and communication consultant, will provide her experience-based guidance on how to respond to a crisis involving issues of race at the PRSA Dallas monthly luncheon Thursday, Aug. 18, at Seasons 52 at NorthPark Center (map. PRSSA may join as an associate member. More from chapter president Liz Bobo.

The Inside Story: Reporters Reveal Their Tips and Tricks to Make You Better at Your Job. The bandwagon is rolling for author and attorney (and SPJ member) Scott Bell. He'll sign copies of his book, "The War We Lose Before We Fight," which chronicles the history and significance of the Buffalo Soldiers. Historical figure makes appearances, including Josephine Baker, Ernest Hemingway, Articles by other journalists who covered World War Two. The bandwagon is rolling for author and attorney (and SPJ member) Scott Bell. He'll sign copies of his book, "The War We Lose Before We Fight," which chronicles the history and significance of the Buffalo Soldiers. Historical figure makes appearances, including Josephine Baker, Ernest Hemingway, Charley Hodges.

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Two major political conventions coincided recently, perhaps you liked them, perhaps not. Whatever your reaction, neither came close to the drama in August 1968 in Chicago during the Democratic National Convention. PR pros know that a political convention is supposed to set the tone for the campaign that is to come. Unfortunately for the Democrats, that’s pretty much what happened.

Vietnam War protests and race riots were raging, and President Johnson, who had decided not to seek re-election. In addition, many Democrats were bitter that their underdog candidate, Eugene McCarthy, was leading. Adding to the angst, war protesters saw the convention as a showcase for their movement.

City’s water supply with LSD. Chicago Mayor Richard Daley did not take the threats lightly. Suffocating security at the International Amphitheater elicited complaints. Daley canceled all permits for marches and parades, and refused to allow protesters to sleep in the parks. Inside the convention venue, tensions matched between red-faced delegates and party leaders, often lasting until 3 o'clock in the morning.

Security forces roughing up protesters, journalists and bystanders, seemingly the police attacked them all. While this was going on, protesters could be heard shouting, “The whole world is watching!” More than 700 people were injured and more than 100 hospitalized.

The fact that much of the drama was captured on film and television created a PR disaster. As the conflict was unfolding, a Democratic senator snared the convention rostrum to decry police “Gestapo tactics,” drawing the ire of Walter Cronkite, to which he said, “I think we’ve got a bunch of thugs here, Dan.” If it wasn’t a full-blown crisis communications scenario, it was at least a full-blown pre-crisis.

Then came Aug. 28, when some 10,000 protesters confronted police in Lincoln Park. The police, mainly black and white, did not take kindly to being stopped and told to move along. As they did so, protesters could be heard shouting, “The whole world is watching!”

Many convention visitors were appalled at what they considered unnatural behavior. The Chicago Tribune reported, while Life magazine said, “The police behaved, even to their enemies.” Popular newspaper columnist Mike Cochran added, “Never before had so many feared so much from so few.”

On the other hand, surveys conducted afterward found Americans generally backed the mayor and were critical of the protesters. Daley also claimed to have received thousands of letters of support.

And a political party in disarray. People disagree on the long-term impact, but one fact is indisputable: Democrats lost the 1968 presidential election—and six of the next nine as well. Not exactly a good ROI.

Unconventional Thinking

Greater Fort Worth PRSA.

This column reflects the author’s views and is not intended to represent the official position of Greater Fort Worth PRSA. Mike Cochran

In August 1968, the Whole World was Watching — Which was a Real Problem

The mayor put together a convention committee recently, perhaps you liked them, perhaps not. Whatever your reaction, neither came close to the drama in August 1968 in Chicago during the Democratic National Convention. The press knew that a political convention is supposed to set the tone for the campaign that is to come. Unfortunately for the Democrats, that’s pretty much what happened.

To far, it was not the best of ideas for a convention. In the preceding month, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy had been assassinated. Vietnam protests were rampant and civil rights were raging, and President Johnson had decided not to seek re-election. CBS correspondent Eugene McCarthy had launched a last-minute bid. Clearly, many Democrats were bitter that their underdog candidate, Eugene McCarthy, was leading. Adding to the angst, war protesters saw the convention as a showcase for their movement.

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Shoring watches broke out on the convention floor, and cameras captured security forces roughing up Dan Rather, to which Walter Cronkite said, “I think we’ve got a bunch of thugs here, Dan.” If it wasn’t a full-blown crisis communications scenario, it was at least a full-blown pre-crisis.

Then came Aug. 28, when some 10,000 protesters confronted police in Lincoln Park. The situation escalated, and then escalated some more — protesters, journalists and bystanders, seemingly the police attacked them all. While this was going on, we were all watching on television. Most of the coverage was about the demonstrators, but it was far from the whole story.

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Margaret Ritchie...

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.
Margaret currently serves as the executive director of the Student Public Relations Association of Texas (SPART) and the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA).

Margaret is a full-time student at Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth, Texas...

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