

the **PR**ofessional



Inside This Issue

From The Editor
Observations
From The Reporter's Side
He Said/She Said
Member Spotlight
Please Welcome
Credibility and the News Media
Adopt-A-Battalion
Action/Reaction
Social Media Trends
Shout It Out
Coming Up

Kali's Keynote

Friends,

Recently, PRPLI received notice that it won 2017 Best Networking Group in this year's *Long Island Press* Best of Long Island competition. It means a great deal that so many of you supported us with your votes. Thank you.

I think about the thousands of talented members and communications professionals we have influenced and connected across industries to create a strong networking group. PRPLI's leadership, voice, and engagement are more important than ever.

In February, many members, non-members, family, and friends took a moment from their busy schedules to network and volunteer for PRPLI's community service project. We partnered with Adopt-a-Battalion, an organization that collects goods for members of the military who are stationed overseas and creates care packages for our troops. Thank you for your donations, time, and overall

generosity. I was so inspired. I look forward to the next community service event and helping another cause.

Let's keep the momentum going. I invite you to join me for our upcoming events: Elements of Good Design (March 21), Meet and Pitch the Media Night (April 20), and the PRPLI Gala (May 9). I look forward to seeing everyone.

Please feel free to reach out to me any time at info@prpli.org or tweet me at @PRPLITweets or @AdelphiUtweets.

Best,

Koli

Kali Chan President, PRPLI Board of Directors

Who We Are

Our Board consists of the following members:

Executive Board:

President: Kali Chan
Executive Vice President:
Donna Rivera-Downey
First Vice President:
Jessica Bellucci
Treasurer: Louise Cassano
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From The Editor



Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press....

What interesting and history-making times we live in today. It's a time that challenges us to learn more, know more, understand more about basic American rights – the First Amendment to the Constitution, in particular.

As a former news reporter and editor, my tendency is to protect the good name of the free press, but I do understand where the skepticism of the majority of the public comes from. (See statistics on this in "Action/Reaction" by Greg Demetriou and "Credibility and the News Media" by Peter Crescenti in this edition.)

Opinions of news commentators – not always recognizable as bias – are accepted and even encouraged by editors, publishers and other media management. The trending battle cry of individuals who criticize the media charges that all media outlets have a bias. These individuals claim to want news in a straightforward and honest manner, but, instead, they choose sides by their selection of the media that confirms their opinions.

I harken back to my college studies, where first and foremost we were instructed to get the facts on both sides of an issue, validate them with at least two sources who, except in extreme instances, had to be named. I read news stories now and the words "unnamed source," "(individual) not authorized to speak," and "(individual) could not be reached for comment" are commonplace and draw ire and doubt in the validity and balance of the information.

The race to be first in reporting news is blamed, but the damage it causes stems from competition spurred on by management's desire to be the most read, the most watched, the most quoted, the most profitable. I believe students of journalism are being taught the basics of good reporting, but in the endeavor to remain employed are being challenged to sacrifice what they've learned for the sake of winning the race.

As public relations professionals, the plight of the media is our concern as well. It's incumbent upon us to deliver good, useful, and honest information to the media. Our relationship with the media is integral to successfully fulfilling our responsibilities to our clients. The media's relationship with the PR community is dependent on getting out honest information that stands up to the validation process. We need to work together to do our part to reestablish confidence in the news media.



Observations



Do You Speak Jargonese? By Bill Krol

Today we're going to learn how to proactively leverage communication synergies across multiple media platforms in order to effectuate a paradigm shift in constituent interactions.

Naw, we're not. I have no idea what that even means. If you do, you have my sympathies, but it also means you might be fluent in jargon: "the technical terminology or characteristic idiom of a special activity or group; obscure and often pretentious language marked by circumlocutions and long words" (Merriam-Webster).

Let's be honest: We've all resorted to jargonese. Maybe we want to make ourselves or our subjects appear more knowledgeable than they really are. Maybe we're rushing to put out a press release or finish a newsletter article and our brains are too fried to come up with alternative wording. Maybe, we rationalize, everyone knows what we mean.

Except that's not always true. I belong to a couple of Facebook editing groups with members from around the world. Occasionally, a member will post a query about a word or phrase they've come across in a manuscript to check on its meaning or find alternatives. A lot of times, these queries have to do with slang.

For instance, someone recently posted that a British author used the term "junk shop top" to refer to a garment a character was wearing. The poster wanted to know what the analogous American phrase might be. (The general consensus was "thrift store.") Sometimes, differences in slang are not even international, but regional – a Coke is Coca-Cola in the Northeast, but a Coke is any kind of soda in the South, and a soda is pop in the Midwest.

As communications professionals, we have our own "slang" – the terminology and acronyms specific to the industry or specialization we write about. If you're

not familiar with a region's slang or an industry's jargon, its use can leave you scratching your head (or heading to Google for a definition); either way, you hinder your readers' understanding of your message.

Of course, it's not just terminology that affects your readers. Acronym-laden text is also confusing, even within the same industry. For instance, as freelancer, I've copy edited many STEM books. Now, I can assume everyone knows what "STEM" stands for, but for clarity, I should have explained that I've copy edited textbooks whose topics included science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. A few more words, perhaps, but at least my meaning is clear.

Avoid jargon whenever possible, especially when your audience is the general public, not your industry's peers, but bear in mind that keeping it simple is not always simple to do. However, your goal when communicating is to be as clear as possible; the onus is on you to make it understandable for your audience.

William Krol is the communications manager at the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind and America's VetDogs and a freelance copy editor. He tries to keep his descent into jargonese to a minimum, but sometimes, you just have to proactively leverage your synergies. He can be reached at wmkrol@yahoo.com.

If you're interested in learning more about the evils of writing in jargon, check out these sites:

- Fast Company: 4 Ways to Never Ever Use Jargon Again:
- Plain English Campaign
- The Federal Government's Plain Language Guidelines

From The Reporter's Side:



Joe Dowd, Editor, Long Island Business News Interview By Krista Giannak

Joe Dowd's journalism career spans more than 35 years and includes editorial experience in New York and Pennsylvania. He is an

award-winning journalist, known for his expertise in covering major fires and disasters. His historical novel, *Gods & Firemen*, is coming soon on Amazon Kindle, with limited print copies available. He has also taught journalism as an adjunct professor at several New York colleges. PR professionals may pitch him via email at jdowd@libn.com.

Q: Of all the stories you've written, which ones would you consider the most meaningful?

A: I was assistant managing editor at the *Scranton Times/Tribune* when a routine house fire suddenly spread and devoured three adjacent houses. Sounds routine? My dad was a decorated officer in the FDNY (New York City Fire Department), at that point, retired. I dispatched two reporters and a photographer and called him. Something wasn't right. He told me the local fire department lost water, or never had any. The newspaper launched an investigation and found out that not one, but two hydrants had failed. In the immediate aftermath, we learned that fully one third of all hydrants in the city were "dead" and hadn't been inspected in more than six months. The city was forced to declare a state of emergency and bonded for the replacements. The city was safer. We won four first place investigative awards for that series. But in terms of "meaningful," I like to think that my dad and I finally got to put out a fire together.

Q: How has business news coverage changed over the decades?

A: It used to be boring. It is no longer boring and it is much more relevant to the average reader. It's accessible when written with the audience in mind and not just Wall Street types and business owners.

Q: What do you like best about covering business news?

A: It's a chance to explore the community from a very different perspective. It's not like covering school boards and city councils. The issues are much more tangible, much more about dollars and cents, real jobs and real projects that impact the community.

Q: How does covering business news at a specialty publication differ from coverage at a local paper?

A: We have more time to look at a subject in depth.

Q: How do the journalism classes you've taught compare with what you learned when you were a student?

A: When I was pursuing my master's in journalism/ public affairs, I found the course work to be largely theoretical and a waste of my time and money. There's one exception: I got a lot of jobs, including teaching, because I had that degree. Educators thought more highly of that degree dating to 1980 than of the three decades I had in newsrooms. Never could understand that.

I taught my courses through practical experience. I simulated actual news events, press conferences, and a historic fire, using props and old photos. I simulated the key newsmakers holding press conferences. I made students write on tight deadlines but with an editor (me) looking over their shoulder.

Q: How was your experience becoming a self-published author?

A: Self-publishing is an expensive, joyless bear of a job with only a slight chance of any kind of success. Writing the book, an epic about the FDNY, was the true joy of the experience, and if no one ever reads it, I'd do it again. I didn't write it for others; I wrote it for me and the fallen heroes of the FDNY.



Krista Giannak of Writing Wise Words That Matter is a freelance writer. She can be reached at krista@giannak.net or at Linkedin.com/in/kristagiannak.

He Said, She Said





I have always believed that marketers are not the best consumers. I tend to have no patience with solicitation calls, and I don't like when I am approached by a salesperson in a shop asking me if I need help. I like to buy when I want to and shop in peace. As you can imagine, buying a car is my least favorite thing to do. The same holds true for calls that come around dinnertime from charities, the endless sea of coupons in the mail, and surveys from doctors' offices.

Such are reasons why I find it especially curious that the other day I actually spent 10 minutes of my time taking a survey on-line from a company we do business with. Why?

The email asked me for 10 minutes up front, and it said that I would be entered into a raffle and have the chance to win three monetary prizes. It wasn't Powerball, but it wasn't pennies, either. I have been known to take chances, and this grabbed my attention for a few seconds.

Instead of banishing this intrusive email to my junk bin with the delete key, I popped it open. Again, it grabbed my attention with good writing. It asked for 10 minutes of my time, reminded that I had a chance to win some money, and explained that I would take a survey to help them decide upon an ad campaign. Hmmm, I thought – they are asking me to be a member of a virtual focus group.

I enjoy the creative process, and I appreciated this innovative way for this company to get feedback from its clients. It was attempting to do some old-fashioned listening in a new-fashioned way. I agreed.

I spent some minutes viewing three different campaigns and answering five questions (very Goldilocks – not too much, not too little, just right). In the process, as they pointed out, they would get to know more about me, and I would have a chance to learn more about myself,

my likes and my dislikes, what appealed to me and what didn't, and it was up to me to figure out why.

The form was easy to navigate. No glitches. Well-written. Easy on the eye, as they say.

I found the exercise to be a beneficial one for my job, and although I am not holding my breath to win the prize. I am still a bit surprised that someone finally hooked me. That being said, kudos to this company for turning a marketer into a better consumer.

Debra Scala Giokas is the director of marketing at Certilman Balin Adler & Hyman, LLP, and she has been in the field of legal marketing for 26 years. She recently began Debra Ann Dolls & things to help in fundraising activities. If you are interested in learning more, email her at debraanndolls@gmail.com.

He Said... New-Fashioned Listening in an Old-Fashioned Way

I don't have very much patience anymore for sales pitches. I know I sound like an old curmudgeon, but some pitches have the sound of nails on a chalkboard.

Moments before I sat down to write this column, I hung up on a young lady ("Emily") who giggled through reading part of a script telling me I was eligible for a 75 percent discount at a resort I supposedly stayed at. I stopped her after a few seconds, thanked her for the call (I was in a good mood), and hung up on her.

I know cold callers are just trying to make a buck, but I've heard so many of them over the years that I think I'm entitled to cherry pick which ones I want to listen to.

It's the same with email. I especially like the ones that come in as if you're an old friend. "George, did I miss your call last week? Let's set up another conference call today." Or, "Can I have just a few minutes of your time today?" No. Can I call you at home later this evening and be annoying? And text pitches should be outlawed.

Once in a blue moon, though, something does come across my email or phone that catches my attention. If

Continued Online: Click Here

PRPLI Member Spotlight: Jillian Eisman



By Valerie Esposito

PPRPLI member Jillian Eisman recently made headlines around the world after donating an important piece of history – one that she discovered, interestingly enough, at a local garage sale.

In July 2015, Eisman was browsing through a closet at a Bellmore tag sale when she stumbled upon an extremely rare item. She quickly identified the piece as a historical, haunting symbol of suffering.

"I immediately knew, without even removing it from its place on the rack, that this was a concentration camp jacket," says Eisman. "I placed the jacket over my arm, asked for a price and paid a nominal fee for a few items. When I went to the car to show my husband what I thought I had found, I noticed the numbers on the chest and my initial thoughts were confirmed."

Eisman's suspicions were correct. The jacket was once owned by Ben Peres (née Benzion Peresecki), a prisoner at the Nazi Dachau concentration camp during World War II. After purchasing the jacket for just \$2, Eisman donated it to the Kupferberg Holocaust Center at Queensborough Community College.

Dr. Cary Lane of the Kupferberg Holocaust Center told Haaretz.com that Peres was spared when Nazis invaded his Lithuanian homeland because he was 15 years old at the time. He was put to work making munitions, and, years later, wrote about repeated beatings he suffered as a prisoner.

According to the <u>article</u>, Peres later spent four years in a displaced persons' camp, where he was reunited with his mother and earned a high school equivalency diploma. Eventually making his way to the United States, he received a degree from Cooper Union in Manhattan and worked as a mechanical engineer.

After Peres's and Eisman's paths crossed, with Eisman making her donation to the Center, curators spent many months researching and preserving the jacket. In fall 2016, the Center opened an <u>exhibit called</u> "The Jacket from Dachau: One Survivor's Search for Justice, Identity and Home."

"After the exhibit opened, I wrote a press release about the jacket and its discovery," says Eisman. "I shared it with various media outlets and AP published the story, quickly sending it viral."

Within days, Peres's and Eisman's stories were picked up all over the world, including Israel, Argentina, Australia, and Mexico. Eisman began receiving calls from *Newsday, CBS, News 12, FiOS1*, and many others.

"I did two television interviews, was mentioned on several radio stations and was contacted via social media by scores of people from around the world who had read about the jacket," says Eisman. "It was pretty incredible to see how sending that release to one interested media contact could turn into such a firestorm."

Since then, Eisman has been invited to a number of schools and temples to present her story and will document the jacket's discovery so it can be preserved in the Library of Congress.

"From this experience, the most valuable PR lesson for me was that if you do not put yourself out there, no one will ever know your story," she says. "The exhibit was wonderful and the Center took great care to make the opening day a success, but if I hadn't taken the time to share the jacket's journey with reporters, this significant historical piece would have only been visible to those visiting the Center. Now, it will live on in social media sites and within the archives of various media outlets indefinitely."

Long before she became a media celebrity, Eisman earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of

Continued Online: Click Here

Please Welcome



PRPLI welcomes the following new members. Please be sure to introduce yourself when you see them at an upcoming meeting.

- Jody Fisher, vice president Public Relations, Austin-Williams Agency
- Grace Kelly-McGovern, Suffolk County Dept. of Health Services
- Diane Ziskin, student, Hofstra University

Credibility and the News Media



By Peter Crescenti

In their iconic 1968 hit song "Mrs. Robinson," Simon and Garfunkel ask the question, "Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio?"

In 2017, if they were singing about the news media, they might be asking, "Where have you gone, credibility?"

It's a question many news consumers are asking these days – and not just because of the President Trump—mainstream media feud. No, the decline in media credibility has been going on for years, and, now, according to a September 2016 Gallup Poll, it has hit an all-time low, with only 32 percent of Americans saying they have a "great deal" or "fair amount" of trust in mass media "to report the news fully, accurately and fairly." That's a troubling eight-point drop over 2015. (See how these stats vary from the Fox News poll of January 2017 by reading Greg Demetriou's "Action/Reaction" article on page 9).

Even worse, if recent developments such as the BuzzFeed debacle over publishing an unsubstantiated Donald Trump "dossier" (Bob Woodward called it "a garbage document") and the admission of NBC's Chuck Todd that "political correctness got in the way" of reporting unflattering aspects of the Hillary Clinton campaign are any indication, the bottom is not yet in sight.

"Yes, it can get worse," says Edie Reinhardt, principal at RDT Content Marketing. "Unfortunately, as long as people want to read garbage there will be those who will deliver it."

Newsday columnist Joye Brown, who spoke recently at a Huntington Chamber of Commerce Meet the Media breakfast, said she longs for the days in the newsroom when her boss's motto – "Get it first. Get it right" – ruled the day. "With today's news environment and the demands of social media and the 24-hour news cycle, the 'Get it right' too often falls away from the 'Get it first,'" she added.

"Reporters have become lazy," says Jeffrey Morosoff, associate professor in the Department of Journalism, Media Studies and Public Relations at Hofstra University. "They more often reflect and regurgitate information they are fed and avoid focusing on complicated issues and facts. This, combined with shrinking resources and stiff competition, is a recipe for less investigative reporting, inadequate fact-checking, and fewer thoughtful voices."

And it could get worse before it gets better if other media voices buy into BuzzFeed editor Ben Smith's proclamation that the Trump dossier dump "reflects how we see the job of reporters in 2017."

"It shouldn't be the standard," Reinhardt warns.
"I hope that good reporters and the public keep criticizing these actions."

At the Huntington Chamber breakfast, Brown also drew news consumers into the equation for helping solve the media's myriad of problems. "It is important for the audience to develop news literacy," she said.



There is always hope, Morosoff says, but the ball is clearly in the media's court. "When the media gets back to basics and reports a story thoroughly and smartly, we all benefit. Investigative journalism is not quite dead, and when journalists live up to the promise of serving as the Fourth Estate, they can again be the influencing factor that our Founding Fathers understood to be so essential to a functioning democracy."

Peter Crescenti is media relations manager at Farmingdale State College.

PRPLI Partners With ADOPT * A * BATTALION

PRPLI marked the beginning of the new year with an emphasis on reaching out. In the first of its projects, members solicited donations and partnered with Adopt-a-Battalion, to create care packages to be sent to members of the military stationed overseas. A large number of PRPLI members and their families and friends turned out for the event and enjoyed a day of camaraderie and community service.



Participating PRPLI members with Bryan Parker, vice president of Adopt-a-Battalion (fifth from left) included (I-r) Andrea Jones, Danielle DeSouza, Kali Chan, Jerry Allocca, Edie Reinhardt, Theresa Jacobellis, Cassandra Rowan and Valerie Esposito











Action/Reaction

The Race To End All Races

By Greg Demetriou

It seems that a topic du jour is that fake news is infiltrating mainstream reporting. Well, maybe not exclusively mainstream media outlets, but surely across the Internet and blog-o-sphere.

"Fake news is really just an extreme form of what we commonly call 'propaganda,' which has been around since the advent of the printing press," says Mark Grossman of Mark Grossman Public Relations. He adds: "Since the 15th century, governments were the main purveyors of the earliest fake news." Some might say that not much has changed.

The distribution of fake news and the level of disruption it causes has reached a fever pitch. Once the domain of the *National Enquirer*, the Internet now produces stories containing alternative facts, quoting of unnamed sources, doctored images, fragments of outrageous statements clearly out of context, and none of it is true. It is a serious and nagging reality of today's instant and pervasive spread of information, true or not.

A Fox News poll (January 24, 2017) of 1000 national registered voters indicated that 84 percent are, at least, somewhat concerned fake news is "hurting the country." Of that number, 61 percent are "very" worried, and another 23 percent are "somewhat" concerned. Only 15 percent aren't worried about the phenomenon, where false stories are passed off as real, factual reporting. (See how this differs from a Gallup Survey in September 2016 in Peter Crescenti's "Credibility and the News Media" article on page 7).

Tim Hurley of Cahill Strategies says, "In this day and age, in one of the most modern societies on the planet, with unfettered Internet access, there is no reason not to check the facts we read before we repeat them. We're in a new era where we have the ability to check for truth but we just haven't gotten good at it yet."

Grossman adds, "What makes today different is that the tools to communicate to the public are very accessible to the average person." Social media sites are great incubators for not only the obvious but also the more subtle fake news stories. So how can public relation professionals deal with fake news?



It is a question to which few PR professionals have an answer.

Besides denying the veracity of the news items, how can targets of false news stories find ways to correct the record? Are denials generally seen as "He doth protest too much?" to paraphrase the great Bard William Shakespeare. Regardless of initial public doubt, a public relations professional must react

Continued Online: Click Here

Social Media Trends

"We need to be on Snapchat!"

By Cassandra Rowan



If this was my friend telling me to create a personal Snapchat account, I might say "Sign me up!" But this isn't coming from a friend, this is coming from upper management.

When I encounter conversations like this, my first reaction is always to say, "Well, I don't know," and often wonder to myself if we actually need to be there.

Before creating accounts haphazardly, there are a few important things to consider:

• What is the organization's goal for developing a social media presence? Define your goals and purpose. Clearly defined goals will help determine the message and the targeted audience.

Continued Online: Click Here

Shout It Out

The beginning of the new year has been an amazing time for our amazing members and for PRPLI, too. Check out these noteworthy accomplishments.

In the *Long Island Press* Best of Long Island Competition: PRPLI was named 2017 Best Networking Group on Long Island

Kali Chan, PRPLI president, was named 2017 Best Publicist

Epoch 5 was named 2017 Best PR firm

Julie Martorana was promoted to marketing director at accounting firm UHY, LLP.



Inductees to Long Island Business News 40 Under 40, who were honored in January, included:

Melissa Kuehnle, director of communications and external relations at St. Joseph's College

Jake Mendlinger, director of public relations services at Zimmerman Edelson

Honorees in the Long Island Business News Excellence in Communications Awards, who will be honored in

March, include the following PRPLI members in the following categories:

Government Relations

Mark Grossman, Mark Grossman Public Relations

In-House Marketing & Communications Professional Leader

Ellen Christie, Pegalis & Erickson, LLC

Marketing Team

CJ2 Communications Strategies LLC Lorraine Gregory Communications Tina Atlas Panos, Panos Graphic Services, Inc. Adelphi University Communications & Marketing Team WordHampton Public Relations

Mentor

Greg Demetriou, Lorraine Gregory Communications

Nonprofit Marketing & Communications Professional Leader

Jessica DiMeo, American Heart Association

PR Campaign

Kali Chan, Adelphi University Audrey Cohen, Epoch 5 Public Relations WordHampton Public Relations

Print & Ad Design

Lorraine Gregory Communications

Print Campaign

CJ2 Communications Strategies
Tina Atlas Panos, Panos Graphic Services, Inc.

Sole Practitioner

Edie Reinhardt, RDT Content Marketing

Congratulations to St. Joseph's College for winning the 2017 Folio Award conferred by Fair Media Council in the category of Blog Master (best overall blog site devoted to a particular topic or interest).

Keep it up, PRPLI!

Our congratulations go out to all of these winners and honorees. If we missed any, we apologize and encourage all of our members to keep us informed and updated on all of your accomplishments.

Coming Up

Tuesday, March 21, 6-9 PM Elements of Good Design

Four Points Sheraton, 333 S Service Road
Plainview, NY 11803
Panelists include:
Tim Hurley, Cahill Strategies
Tina Atlas Panos, Panos Graphics
Evan Bloom, Sir Speedy
Moderators, Cassandra Rowan, Girl Scouts of Nassau
County and Louise Cassano, LuCas Communications

Panelists will focus on the production process of marketing materials with an emphasis on content, design and printing and producing a completed project from concept to delivery. For more information and to register, go to http://prpli.org/calendar/elements-good-design/.

Thursday, April 20, 6-9 PM Annual Meet the Media Night

Panelists include Elisa DiStefano, Entertainment and Features Reporter, News 12 Joe Dowd, Editor, LIBN Sharon Van Zwieten, Assignment Manager, Fios Amy Waldman, News Director, PIX11 Martin Untrojb, WCBS Newsradio 880 Moderator, Flo Federman, Marketing Manager, Marcum LLP

Tuesday, May 9 – Mark your calendar! PRPLI Awards Gala

Venue – Westbury Manor

Look for information in upcoming Newsbites and online at <u>prpli.org</u>.



Connect With PRPLI

Stay in the loop with PRPLI's digital network.

For up-to-date information on programs,
the membership directory, access to the
PRPLI newsletter and other forms, please visit us
at PRPLI.org. You can also follow us on
Facebook, Twitter @PRPLITweets and on LinkedIn.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SOMEONE'S LIFE AND CAREER.

Encourage a colleague, student or business associate to become a member of PRPLI.

Membership has its rewards:

- Discounts to educational programs
- Free mixers
- Discount to the annual PRPLI awards gala
- Annual member meeting, board elections and dinner
- Weekly e-news update
- Quarterly e-newsletter: The PRofessional
- Access to our members-only job bank
- Active engagement with fellow members on our LinkedIn group, Facebook page and Twitter account

Fees for membership:

New individual memberships: \$125

Individual renewal: \$100

New corporate memberships (includes up to three members): \$300

Renewing corporate memberships (includes up to three members): \$250

Each additional member for a corporate membership: \$75

Student membership: \$25

An application form can be downloaded at http://prpli.org/membership/join-prpli/.