

Confession of a “grammarholic” shared in March

The following remarks were made during the March West Virginia Chapter meeting.

I know I should mind my own business. I’ve known that for a long time. I just can’t help myself. I’m an addict.

My name is George Arnold, and I am a “grammarholic.” And because no organization exists to treat this affliction anonymously, I’m making a public confession. It’s my choice of therapy. So, please give me your attention and judge me compassionately.

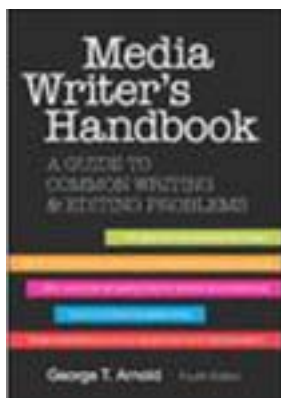
You see, I am a habitual copy editor. I correct everything. I bother everybody. And my efforts are not always appreciated.

I request changes in menus that offer “desert” instead of “dessert” and tuna “fish” instead of just tuna. (After all, there is no tuna lamb or tuna hog, is there?)

Parking lot notices warning that “Violators Will Be Towed” evoke visions of a tow-truck operator lassoing an offending driver and dragging him kicking and screaming down the road.

Placards proclaiming that “You must be 21 years of age to purchase alcoholic beverages” make me think you’d better drink fast because you can buy the stuff during only one year in your life.

I’m distracted in church when the minister talks about something “that is hard for you



and I (instead of me) to do.” By the time I get my mind back to the sermon, it’s often

over. I frequently leave church feeling as if I’ve blown another opportunity to gain favor with the Lord.

A newspaper headline reporting that spectators “watch their memories go up in smoke” makes me wonder if looking at a school fire can cause amnesia.

Fast-food restaurant signs offering “five new menu items for 99 cents” drive me directly to the office of the assistant manager. Occasionally, I’ll persuade someone to add “each” to the sign. But more often, I’m just patronized, given a cookie, a pat on the head and pointed in the direction of the nearest exit.

The experience can be humbling, but it doesn’t deter me for long. I inevitably regress the next time I see a yard sign information the world that “The Milligan’s” or “The Bunch’s” or the “Williams’s” live here instead of “The Milligans,” “The Bunches,” and “The Williamses.”

It was just such an incorrect

sign – and expensive, decorative one I saw at a large public event – that most recently caused me to stray. And this time, my good intentions were received neither with appreciation nor with indifference, but with unanticipated hostility.

The experience causes me to wonder why a representative of a business that sells these products would be more offended by having the error politely and privately identified than by displaying it to thousands of potential customers? It bothered me then, and it bothers me still. (My feelings are easily hurt.)

In need of consolation and support, where do I turn? Surely, not again to my long-suffering family and friends. They’ve taken

Continued on page 4

Inside info

Confession of a “grammarholic”	1
Crystal Awards.....	2
Diamond Awards.....	2
Chapter benefits.....	2
2008 directory online.....	3
Meeting notice.....	3
President’s corner.....	4
Calendar.....	4

Crystal Awards

And the winner is.....to be announced June 18

Start planning now which 2007 campaigns and projects you will enter in the 2008 Crystal Awards competition.

Official entry forms have been mailed and are available at www.prsawv.org.

First place and honorable mention awards will be given at the judges' discretion.

Campaign entries cover community relations, special events and observances, plus crisis, internal, external and integrated communications.

Project entries cover annual reports, internal and external newsletters and magazines, writing, press kits, collateral materials, audiovisual presentations and web sites. Project subcategories for articles and holiday cards are being continued this year.

Competition is open to business/industry, not-for-profit, agency and student entries.

The final deadline for entries is 4:00 p.m. Friday, April 18, 2008. An entry may be received by April 11 for an "Early Bird Special." No entry can be received after April 18.

Entry fees are \$35 per entry for PRSA-WV members and \$55 per entry for nonmembers for entries submitted by the April 11 early bird deadline. Entries received by the April 18 final deadline are \$45 for members and \$65 for nonmembers. There is no fee for student entries. Make checks to PRSA-WV.

All the entry and summary forms can be downloaded at www.prsawv.org and MUST BE submitted electronically to we.are.pr@prsawv.org, along with a digital photograph representative of your entry. A hard copy of each form must also accompany your entry and can be mailed or delivered to: BrickStreet Mutual Insurance, Attn: John Womack, 400 Quarrier Street, Charleston, WV 25301.

Individual honors will be given for Chapter Service and

Practitioner of the Year. To nominate someone for either of these honors, please contact any PRSA-WV Chapter board member by 4:00 p.m. on April 18.

Thanks go to event sponsors Columbia Gas Transmission and MetroNews Networks.

The 2008 Crystal Awards Gala will be held June 18 and Charlie Cooper will serve as emcee.



Diamond Awards

2007 Diamond Awards given

The East Central District (ECD) of PRSA has announced the Diamond Award winners for 2007. Winners from the West Virginia Chapter are:

- **Charles Ryan Associates**
Joe Gollehon
Honorable Mention,
Community Relations
Campaign
*My West Virginia State Parks:
What They Mean to Me Essay
Contest*
- **Charles Ryan Associates**
Joe Gollehon
Honorable Mention, Special
Events Campaign
Friends of Coal Bowl

- **The Arnold Agency**
Tammy Wheeler
Honorable Mention,
Institutional Relations Tactics
RTPCC Media Kit

PRSA-WV benefits

- Accreditation support
- Chapter & Verse
- Code of Ethics
- Committee service
- Leadership opportunities
- Membership directory
- Monthly programs
- Networking opportunities
- Professional development
- Skills development
- Volunteer opportunities
- Web site

News

2008 directory online soon

The 2008 Membership Directory for the PRSA-WV Chapter will be posted to the web site in April. There will be no print directory this year.

The directory, a benefit of chapter membership, contains: a listing of chapter officers; committee responsibilities, chairpersons and members; information on the accreditation program and a list of members who have earned the APR designation; past presidents; special honorees; chapter bylaws and policy manual; plus room for additional notes and changes. The directory listing for each member includes name, title, employer, address, telephone/fax numbers and email address.

We thank our advertisers, BrickStreet Insurance, Charleston Civic Center, Charleston CVB and Marriott Town Center Hotel, for making the directory possible.

If we have made an error in your listing, please use the correction form contained in the directory.

Our chapter members find the directory to be a valuable resource and reference throughout the year. We hope you will find the 2008 edition to be useful.

Meeting Notice

What you need to know: Photos

As PR practitioners, we are frequently called upon to be the one behind the camera, rather than the one in front of it. But do we really make the most of the opportunity? Do we use the technology to our best advantage?



The April 16 luncheon will feature Buddy Davidson who will tell the group “Everything I know about photography – in twenty minutes or less.”

The presentation is applicable to both film and digital formats, and will teach you how to use all those buttons on your camera. He also will explain why cameras will never outsmart the human race, and how to take charge of that expensive piece of hardware and make it work for you!

As a bonus, bring your camera and instruction manual and he’ll help you “figure it all out.”

The Marriott Town Center Hotel will be hosting this noon luncheon meeting on Wednesday, April 16. The board of directors will meet at 11:00 a.m. Reservations are required for this meeting and must be received by Friday, April 11. Cancellations after the deadline will be billed. The cost for the meeting is \$17 for students and members and \$22 for guests. Please add \$5 per person for walk-ins or if we must bill you.

.....
 Yes, I will attend the luncheon on “What you need to know: Photos” on Wednesday, April 16.

Name _____

Company _____

Email _____

Guest _____

Company _____

Check enclosed for \$17 per student or member and \$22 per guest (\$_____)

Reservations are required for this meeting and must be received by Friday, April 11.

Make check payable and mail with reservation form to:

PRSA-WV Chapter
PO Box 13604
Charleston, WV 25360-0604



President's Corner

Student mixer fun for all

Our newest annual tradition, the PRSA/PRSSA mixer, drew students from both Marshall and WV State University, as well as over a dozen chapter members and other professionals.

This "speed networking" event allowed groups of students

to visit with professionals from all facets of PR practice.

We're already looking forward to next year's event,

Tammy H. Wheeler



Confession of a "grammarholic"

Continued from page 1

to telling me to "Give it a rest, George." Consequently, my appeal is to you. (I mean, after all, you have to put up with me this one time only.)

Join me in my modest crusade. Bother people. Make corrections. Risk getting rebuffed.

Even if you don't, I'll carry on because I like to think I'm doing some good. You may disagree, but please humor me. I long ago reached the point where I cherish my illusions.

Dr. Arnold is a professor emeritus in the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications at Marshall University and author of "Media Writer's Handbook: a guide to common writing and editing problems."

PRSA-WV Chapter
PO Box 13604
Charleston, WV 25360



April 16

Marriott Town Center Hotel
12:00 p.m.

Board Meeting
11:00 a.m.