throughs," explains Charlie Farley, chief creative officer. Literature analysis & software were developed with the U of Alabama's School of Comn, which will use both in the classroom. (More info, C&W, 225 Park Ave S, NYC 10003; 212/598-3600, fax 212/598-3665)

¶ADVICE FOR RELATIONSHIP-BUILDERS & TEAM LEADERS from that unfailing source, bumper stickers:

> *51% Sweetheart ... 49% Bitch ... Don't Push It*

Male version uses "bastard." The point seems clear.

¶INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS CASE STUDIES is a collection of 40 entries from IPRA Golden World Awards for Excellence. Cases from 15 countries cover: the environment, community relations, employee relations, healthcare, corporate, public affairs, business to business, art & culture, media relations, transportation & energy. Book "bears out the idea that the theory & philosophy of public relations is the same worldwide but shows that the actual planning & implementation of a public relations program varies according to the economic, cultural, religious & social character of the country in which it is performed." Professor Sam Black, IPRA past pres, is book's editor. (From Freepost 1, Kogan Page, 120 Pentonville Rd, London N1 9BR; 071-278 0433; fax 071-837 6348)

¶WHY THE PEOPLE HAVE BASIC DISTRUST OF BUSINESS is obvious in a recent USAToday biz page story: "Few things on Wall Street warm hearts as consistently as job cuts." Item tells how stocks rise when layoffs are announced. As the epitome of counterproductive short-term thinking & antisocial attitudes, Wall Street may be asking for a body blow. It's been one thing after another for several years now. The combination of out of touch & insensitive usually means trouble. Who's going be left with decent paychecks to fuel the long awaited "recovery"?

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

RETIRES. Counselor Jim Fox (Ft. Lauderdale) moves to Brazil, donates 3,500 books from his & his late wife's (popular economics writer Sylvia Porter) professional library to Florida International U; 350 of the books are specifically on pr, adv'g & journalism, giving FIU's School of Journalism & Mass Comn library "one of the best collections of historic communications texts in the country," says school's dean.

NOTICE TO OUR READERS

Following our tradition, pr reporter will not be published next week to allow our printer & members of our staff a vacation. Our office will be open for business, however, so call or fax your requests.

TARGETED, LOCALIZED SCHOOL CAMPAIGN BEATS ANTI-TAX LAW

Washington state has a strong anti-tax measure requiring a 60% vote to approve school tax measures. Edmonds School District passed a school construction bond (61% in favor) by adopting critical strategies from "the new pr." Key components: 1) concentrating on "voters likely to be supportive"; 2) "identifying & strategically reducing barriers they had about supporting this tax issue," Sylvia Soholt, comty rels mgr, told prr.

RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGY TO OVERCOME DISBELIEF

1. "We were able in previous efforts to get 53-57%, but not 60%." **Survey asked voters why**. Of particular interest were the "no" voters to determine barriers to gaining support. "We learned they 1) felt taxes are too high, 2) didn't know how money was to be spent, 3) felt school district had enough space" -- all topics covered in campaigns but not understood or believed, & which could turn away supporters as well.

2. **Also did focus group research.** "We wanted to see if we could structure a package so the impact on the voter is no new taxes. Our taxes are such that some measures go off the tax rolls because they've been paid off & some come on. But people told us 'I wouldn't believe that was the case. *I just wouldn't look at the material you'd send me.*' So we decided a small increase is more credible & more saleable than the idea of no new taxes."

PERSONAL MEDIA TO RESPOND TO NEEDS

3. Organized 25-mbr **Citizens Committee** -- CofC director, local attorney, similar volunteers. Got representation from each school.

4. **Created mailings before the campaign** to answer the space issue identified in the survey. Buildings had been sold or leased when enrollment declined, so district no longer had adequate space.

5. Citizens Cmte was asked to put together **proposals that would cost taxpayers $5/month or less**.

6. **Presented these proposals** to citizens within district's 4 quadrants at 4 separate meetings. "We laid out the issues, showed them the proposals, showed them our enrollment numbers, talked about the condition of buildings, and showed them the ceilings on the proposals -- $3 & $4/month. They said, '*You've got big problems, you should do more!*'"

7. **Sent to every household a publication** headlined "Your neighbors say we should do more!" Also addressed other concerns identified from survey -- graphically, rather than with lengthy reading material.

8. "Because we heard at each of the meetings 'What are you going to do at my school?,' the board came back with **a ballot package that included some improvement for each school** -- in some cases small ones." Soholt's research (see box) shows that "if something is happening for people at their schools, if you can put something tangible on the bond proposal, they're more likely to support the district, too."

FOCUS ON SUPPORTERS, NOT TURNING AROUND NOs

9. **Identified precincts** where issues in previous votes had been supported by 60% or more, & 55% or more. "Decided to concentrate on those who have been supportive or borderline in the past."

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

10. **Created mailings just for these areas,** responding to concerns expressed in the survey. "People fixate on the big number, in this case $117 million. In the mailings we concentrated on the fact it was $4 more per month for the average taxpayer." One mailing read: "Choose one item from this list," like a movie ticket, 1/3 of a ski ticket, a cassette tape. Then "choose 32 from this list," which included 32 projects in schools, including new schools. Cost of each was $4/month. "It was specific recognition they're getting a bargain that persuaded them."

11. Did **doorbelling** -- 1-on-1 face-to-face communication.

12. **Teams at every school** provided info in their neighborhoods. Because Soholt's research showed that if people support their local school, they're likely to support the district as well, Citizens Cmte intentionally put 1 person in charge of each of the district's 4 quadrants. Each was responsible for insuring there were at least 3 people from each school identified & working on the campaign.

PEOPLE SUPPORT SCHOOLS, NOT DISTRICTS

Every 3 yrs, schools in Lake Washington district ask parents to evaluate their effectiveness. Grades of A to F are asked for such components as quality of instruction, student achievement, school communication, overall quality of the educational program at the *school* as well as the *district*.

Soholt used this info to compare the relationship between parent perceptions of schools & the district. She found parents are likely to grade the district with a score similar to the grade they give their schools. **"The question for practitioners, then, is what kinds of ongoing informational programs are most likely to win support from voters:**

Those which have a district-wide focus, or those which are more specific to local schools?" Her answer: "Since it can be demonstrated that parents may judge the quality of a school district by the quality of the educational program at their local school, then the majority of time & resources should be allocated to local schools to assist them in building strong informational channels with their local communities." (For copy write prr)

EXPERT SAYS STAKEHOLDERS ARE HIGH PRIORITY, NOT MEDIA

"It's amazing how many of the books, articles & speeches on crisis management recommend that anyone involved in a crisis be open with the news media. Who's kidding whom?" asks Robert Irvine of The Institute for Crisis Management.

An *orgn's first priority is contacting those people who have a personal stake in the business*. These stakeholders' primary source of information should be the org'n involved, not the media. Once the key audience has been informed, *then* contact the media. "You may not get them all before they see & hear the news, but your efforts to inform them on a timely basis will do a great deal to maintain their support in the crisis aftermath."

> Regarding the media: "Many pr people are surprised to hear that 'the public's right to know' is not in the Constitution. An AP editor coined that term in the 1930s."

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO PRACTITIONERS

¶**TOBACCO INDUSTRY'S STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL,** an all-out pitch for "smokers' rights", has a basic flaw. Theme is to liken restrictions on smoking to Prohibition, foot-in-door for gov't to outlaw who-knows what. But the ancient rule that "one person's rights stop at the end of the next person's nose" destroys the argument -- because even if all other points are eliminated, smoke & its odor cannot but penetrate the next person's nose. Even if secondhand smoke doesn't cause cancer, most feel it does stink -- and the body of law is clear such nuisance needn't be accommodated.

¶**PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS.** When sec'y Mike Espy took charge of US Dep't of Agriculture last year his rhetoric equated pr with publicity, therefore expendable (prr 2/15/93). Gov't section of PRSA decided to create a taskforce to meet with USDA, show that pr is far more than Espy described. "Wes Pedersen & I met with dpa Ali Webb & had a very constructive talk," John Paluszek told prr. "She indicated she'd be happy to have us as informal counselors." But followup calls received no response. "We were able to deliver an outside expert opinion with which Ali Webb concurred. Perhaps she used it to have the most progressive & constructive definition of public relations, using it as a criterion for the changes that have taken place." (See prr 6/20)

¶**PR FIRM DEVELOPS CREATIVITY SOFTWARE** designed specifically for pr. Cohn & Wolfe's "Ampersoft" suggests several different exercises for the user, such as "name as many items (objects, things, people, places or anything you might imagine) that can be related to your client in any way." Later, software asks the user to generate new communications ideas from each entry. Software stemmed from an analysis of 50 yrs of creativity literature, which C&W published in '93. Common principles found in the literature are applied to the programming. "Our initial results are encouraging, both in terms of idea quality & speed. In less than 2 hours, we've generated more than a hundred new ideas, some of which are real break-