

Random Notes

From the desk of Michael Willard, chairman of Willard International. Random Notes are written for a few special friends of Willard (the agency and the guy).



March, 2014

The Mobile Office



We live in an electronically nomadic world. Our offices are between our ears.

We implement what we do through laptops, iPads and smart telephones.

In essence, the workplace can become the clubhouse where periodic meetings are held.

I wrote those words several years ago in one of my daily “*Willard Notes*” to staff. It was my signal that we were going to an all-mobile office. We partially succeeded. We were the first office in Ukraine—to my knowledge—to totally do away with landline telephones.

It made for a more efficient office. Phone bills actually went down. Clients called directly to our consultants without the filter of a reception.

That was then.

Today, Willard has gone a step further and become a total **mobile office**. We work from anywhere and everywhere with our club house being a conference room and space in the Sofiyskiy Fitness Center Building.

We did this for reasons of practicality, efficiency and creativity. In tough times, we want to make sure our senior consultants are sufficiently rewarded to wake up every morning with one thing on their minds—winning for clients.

This has allowed us to focus on the brains of our business and not overhead—such as onerous lease payments. It was also a natural fit. Since November, Sofiyskiy has been the home of the Willard Round Table dinner and discussion.

So, come by and see me 24-7—that’s when *Sofiyskiy* is open—and let’s grab a cup of coffee at the center’s restaurant. But call first. I might be in the pool.

Public Relations: A Dying Profession?

Maybe not dying, but it is in critical condition and on life support. If your PR company is

acting and re-acting in the same way it did a few years ago, you're a passenger in—ripping off an old automobile commercial—your fathers' Oldsmobile.

And it's a clunker.

Image is fried air. Reality is where it's at. It is not about what you say you do, but what you actually do that counts. It is about being somebody, and not just saying you are somebody.

This holds true for agencies and their clients.

This is why we call ourselves a **Public Accountability** firm. This is not one of those distinctions without a difference. It's a major, life-changing difference for the business. It is not about getting a mention in a publication or in a broadcast (those are scattered tactics).

It is about impacting change.

In other words, it takes corporate social responsibility to a higher level, and at the same time favorably impacts the bottom line which allows us all to stay in business. It is not about doing well but about doing great, and measuring how this relates to the health of the business.

Public Accountability is about clearly defining *the goal*, one which too often falls through the cracks when tactics are piled upon tactics. It is about having an end game and not a zero-sum game. It is about marshalling knowledge to reach your public accountability goal.

It is not about the phony creation of third party endorsements, but having real endorsements. In other words, the key words are honesty and transparency. It is not about buying press, but earning press.

It is also about commitment, and that is what Willard is all about.

Lane Bailey, CEO Advocom Group, a Willard Partner

I first met Lane Bailey above a Chinese restaurant in a

lower part of Charleston, WV where one walked with care after dark. That was the place chosen as headquarter of the Rockefeller for **U.S. Senate** campaign.

In a campaign where we spent \$13 million (a lot of money in the early 80s), John D. Rockefeller IV, then governor of West Virginia, probably could have afforded better. But the atmosphere gave rise to a close-knit, combat ready campaign team led by Lane.

I served as communications director, having left a position as director of the U.S. Senate leadership office to help out Governor Rockefeller.



Lane Bailey

Lane did his magic in coordination and overall leadership, and I did what I do in terms of getting the right messages to the right people.

We made a good team, and though it was a close race, it was Rockefeller who was sworn in as U.S. Senator. That was 30 years ago.

Lane went on to become Rockefeller's chief-of-staff in Washington for many years, later becoming head of the public affairs practice for an international public relations company. Today, he is founder and CEO of **Advocom Group**, a firm which integrates public affairs, corporate leadership and capital markets.

In Washington, Lane's reputation is unmatched. He has an uncanny ability to deliver for clients. No one works harder in advocating a client's position.

After these many years, I am proud to team up again with Lane and with Advocom Group as Willard's partner company in D.C.

Brains and Brawn: A New Paradigm

I'm not saying we're all in perfect physical shape. I could lose 10 kilo and still be considered

chunky by those prejudiced against the nutritional benefits of beer and an occasional French fry.

However, working from a fitness center like **Sofiyskiy** has to kick the cranium into gear. You know, healthy body equals a creative mind.

This got me to thinking. The **new Willard** is actually the same as the old Willard but with an emphasis on more global values when it comes to our clients, our close friends and our team. This meshes with our thought that it is not what you say you do but what you do that counts.

So, here's the marketing strategy some might think a ploy, a gimmick. But it's not because it is as transparent as the eyeglasses you wear or the bottled water you drink. We at Willard believe a healthy product goes hand-in-hand with a creative product.

This is why you will see our company roll out varying strategies for clients that include a healthy element within the package of services. This can take many forms: Nutritional planning, personal training, physical therapy, and yes, massages.

In other words, among other things, we believe a morning swim can do wonders for the psychic. It can launch those mind-stimulating endorphins such that your senior team will be goose-stepping into the competitive arena.

So, if you are interested in gaining an edge through a more **global, strategic and healthy** approach to your business, we want to be there to help you. Or, you can remain as you are—a little winded, a little paunch, a little less...well, you get the picture.

Ask us about the program.

What does this have to do with public relations—or what we call public accountability?

Everything.

Willard Round Table

The one thing about Willard Round

Tables is that they are never boring, particularly with 80,000 Russian troops on Ukraine's borders and a whole region, Crimea, having been kidnapped by a foreign would-be, want-a-be super power with a raving madman at the helm.

The March 13th edition was particularly animated with three diplomats, an SCM representative, an FMCG country manager, a law firm, a securities firm executive, a professor, the head of the EBA, and a fitness center director on hand.

Attending were the following:

Czech Ambassador Ivan Pocuch; Alexander Scherba, Ambassador-at-Large, Ukraine Foreign Ministry; David Meale, Counselor Economist for the U.S. Embassy; Yana Mikhailova, General Manager Nestlé; Iryna Marushko, Lavrynovych and Partners (supporting partner); Jock Mendoza-Wilson, Director of International and Investor Relations, System Capital Management; Anna Derevyanko, Executive Director at European Business Association; Gregory Fishman, senior vp, Foyle Securities; Iryna Ryabchenko, principal, Sofiyskiy Fitness Center; Eric Gilliatt, professor, Edinburgh School of Business.



Peter Charchalis, Executive VP, Willard; Gregory Fishman, senior VP, Foyle Securities; Alexander Scherba, Ambassador-at-Large, Ukraine Foreign Ministry; Michael Willard, Chairman, Willard; Olga Willard, CEO, Willard



Czech Ambassador Ivan Pocuch; Jock Mendoza-Wilson, Director of International and Investor Relations, SCM



Iryna Marushko, Lavrynovych and Partners; Anna Derevyanko, Executive Director, EBA



Peter Charchalis, Executive VP, Willard; Yana Mikhailova, General Manager, Nestlé

Money for Maidan

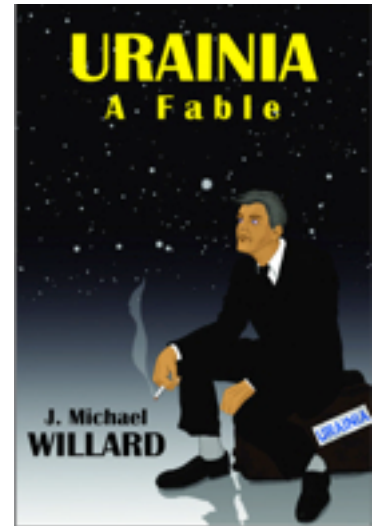
Three cheers for three professional firms and a car dealer:

Asters law firm, **DLA Piper** law firm, **Ernst & Young** accountancy firm and **NIKO**. Between them they bought a wheelbarrow full of my newest novel, *Urainia: A Fable* with the author funds being donated to support the spirit of the Maidan.

The book has relevance to Ukraine. The novel is based on the premise that the first leader of the fictional country of “*Urainia*” that wants to leave a good legacy for his children and grandchildren will be the father of the country.

Several contributions in author funds have gone to buy medical supplies for the **Maidan** and a fund to help the families of victims. Also, money is going to promote Facebook posts and stories that debunk the propaganda lies coming out of the Kremlin.

The book is out in both English and Ukrainian.



In these trying times, I wish us all

Michael Willard