



Louise Bruderle
Editor and Publisher

just some thoughts

This Month: Emily Walsh



Emily Walsh
Photo by Evelyn England

That folks, is a publisher you see on our cover this month. And she's soon to mark her one-year anniversary with her new title. Emily Walsh is the chief digital officer for the Observer Media Group Inc., and is publisher of the company's four Sarasota-based newspapers, magazines and website. That translates to publisher of the East County Observer, Longboat Observer, Sarasota Observer, Siesta Key Observer, Season magazine, LWR Life magazine and YourObserver.com. And she will continue to head up the company's overall digital strategy and operations.

Emily got that title from people who know her well, Matt and Lisa Walsh—her parents. But Emily has put in her time and is a fast learner. It's quite a career detour from her earlier goal of ballet dancer (five years with Sarasota Ballet). But she gracefully works with everyone as you probably know. And she's smart. And, knowing her parents as I do, I know the family work ethic is in her DNA. And you gotta love someone who says, "I'm a fourth-generation newspaper girl, so ink runs through my veins."

We visited with Emily at the Observer Group's Sarasota office where she proudly pointed out to WCW that her Executive Editor is Kat Hughes; Jill Raleigh is Director of Advertising and Marketing, and her CFO is Laura Keisacker.

The company-issued press release noted that, "Emily Walsh, a 15-year employee at the company, is succeeding her mother, Lisa Walsh, as part of a succession plan in the family-owned business. Matt and Lisa Walsh, along with Lisa's parents, David and Ruth Beliles, started the company 21 years ago when they purchased the Longboat Observer. Lisa Walsh will continue as vice president of the company, serving as a mentor for her daughter in Sarasota and sharing oversight with Matt Walsh of the company's 10 newspapers, six websites and magazines."

Emily started in the family biz as a photographer for the Longboat Observer's Black Tie section, moving on to become its editor. From there she became editor of the paper's Black Tie and Arts & Entertainment sections. Rounding out her immersion in publishing, she went to "the other side" - meaning sales - as an advertising sales executive.

In 2009, Walsh directed the company's launch of YourObserver.com and continued to oversee the company's moves into the digital arena. She heads a local publication that has grown by leaps and bounds and is visually dynamic on all levels - print and digital.

Emily is part of an esteemed group of women in the media that we have featured in WCW: Annette Scherman, Marjorie North, Diane McFarlin, Dot Ridings, Janet Weaver, Heidi Godman, Paige St. John, Linda Desmarais and Kristi Krueger.

Utterly Amazing Déjà Vu

We shot Emily's photos for this issue at the Observer Group offices on Main Street. The address immediately rang a very large bell very loudly: 1970 Main Street. No? Yes! That address is where West Coast Woman had its offices back in the 1990s.

We were there before Mediterraneo Restaurant moved in downstairs, but we occupied the 4th floor—where the Observer is (they're on several floors - we were never that big).



Emily Walsh, Publisher at the Observer Group, Observer Group Executive Editor, Kat Hughes and Louise Bruderle, Publisher of West Coast Woman.

So, Evelyn England, WCW's photographer, and I took the elevator up, and low and behold Emily Walsh has my old office. Except it doesn't look anything like my old office. Can you imagine my being there again and knowing another publication and a female publisher is in the same place. Urm, it gets a little weirder...back in the early 1990s I would have been within a year of Emily's

age - 36. Well the old place has changed - save the elevator which was temperamental back then and remains so to this day.

Comings but Mostly Goings



Laura Gilbert

Sarasota YMCA Chairman Paul Bowman announced the appointment of Laura Gilbert to President and Chief Executive Officer after serving as the interim President and CEO since October 2016. Gilbert will continue to guide the operations of the Y while planning for future growth. As a 20-year employee of the Sarasota YMCA, Gilbert has served the Y in many capacities including Director of Contracts, VP of Operations and Interim President and CEO.

Gilbert is the first woman to lead the organization in

this role in its 71-year history. "It is an honor to become the next President and CEO of the Sarasota YMCA," said Gilbert. "This association is known as a leader in ground breaking social impact programs and innovative collaborations across the Y movement. Continuing that tradition and implementing new programs and partnerships that meet the needs of the communities we serve is our primary focus."

A graduate of Florida State University, Gilbert earned her MBA at St. Leo University and is a Certified Fundraising Executive. She is also a member of The Association of YMCA Professionals, North American YMCA Development Organization and the Association for Fundraising Professionals.

Farewell Dr. Sandra Stone, Regional Chancellor at USF Sarasota Manatee. WCW profiled Dr. Stone soon after she arrived in January, 2015. We have no details, but we wish Dr. Stone all the best.



Dr. Sandra Stone



Angela Massaro-Fain

Grapevine Communications has announced that Allison Imre Perkowski has been named the president of the company. Working alongside Grapevine Founder Angela Massaro-Fain and her partner John Fain during the transition, Perkowski plans to continue the firm's renowned dedication to community and clients - with a focus on growth and expansion into additional markets.

Massaro-Fain (who was recognized in 2016 with the prestigious Silver Medal Award by the American Advertising Federation - the second woman to ever receive the mark of distinction) and John Fain will remain on staff serving hands-on roles indefinitely, with Massaro-Fain as Executive Creative Director and Fain as Operations Consultant.

"This transition has been a part of our business strategy, as John and I have discussed the path we'd like to see Grapevine take in the years to come on behalf of our team, our community and our clients," said Massaro-Fain. "For us, it was about finding the right person who brings the vision, energy and enthusiasm, and embraces Grapevine's history while moving the agency into the future."

Perkowski joins the Grapevine family after a decade working in advertising and marketing for a Fortune 500 company. She executed executing marketing campaigns in broadcast, events and digital/social. A graduate of the University of Kansas School of Communications, Perkowski launched her professional career as the Assistant to the Sports Marketing Director of the Kansas City Royals Radio Network.



Allison Imre Perkowski

Beginning in 2007, Perkowski worked with iHeart Media as a Senior Account Executive, managing clients such as Anheuser Busch, the Baltimore Orioles, Schroeder Manatee Ranch and more. In 2011, she was recognized by Radio Ink Magazine as one of the top Account Executives in the country. In both 2011 and 2014, she was honored with the Salesperson of the Year Award at iHeart Media Sarasota.

Allison, her husband David, and her son Rip live in Sarasota and works with non-profit organizations such as United Way, SunCoast Blood Bank, and the Lakewood Ranch Community Fund.

May Issue

This Mother's Day we'll be celebrating more than 85 million moms in the United States. If you're one of them...

Happy Mother's Day!

Louise

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We welcome your thoughts and comments on this column and on other columns and features in this issue. You can reach us at WCWNewspaper@aol.com. We're on the web at www.WestCoastWoman.com.