

PCNY Luncheon
NYC Newspaper Features Editors Share Insights.
November 13, 2002

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Thank you all for inviting me. I'll tell you just a little bit about how the Newsday Features section is organized. We come out every day with a general features section, Monday thru Thursday it's pretty much of a daily magazine, on Friday is our Weekend section. And every day of the week we have a specialized section – on Monday we have Fashion and Fitness, Tuesday we have Family and Relationships, Wednesday is Food Day, like it is everywhere and Thursday is our Home section. On Saturday we have a Religion section and on Sunday we have our big entertainment section, Fanfare. And of course all of those sections have their own editors and I sense that probably the biggest frustration with dealing with navigating thru Newsday's, or probably any newspapers', Features department is figuring out who you should be going to with your pitches. It probably shouldn't be all that hard and I think you have a list of contacts here today, so that, if nothing else, will probably help you tremendously.

I guess there are a couple of things I would say just in general that you should know about Newsday and about Newsday's Features section to help you get things into the newspaper, or at least give your pitch the best possible chance. Major thing is that we are printed in advance. So if you have an event that is happening on Wednesday night and you call me on Wednesday morning in the hopes of getting it in the Thursday newspaper you are really out of luck because the Wednesday Part 2 is in my hand. This is not a good situation but it's the fact of life that we deal with at Newsday, so it's really, really important for you to recognize that our Features section does not do a lot of event coverage. We just can't because of our early deadlines, so that's a time when you really want to turn to one of our City Desks, if it's a Long Island event, you want to go to our Long Island desk, if it's New York event you want to go to our New York City desk.

And the other thing I think I would say about my feelings in terms of dealing with pitches from publicists, from public relations firms is that the thing I most appreciate is when I can tell that the person making the pitch has read my section. And it's really, really easy to tell, because if you call and ask us to write about a new store and you've read our sections for any period of time you'll know that we never write about new stores in any of the Newsday Features sections. The business section covers new stores, we don't. Because we couldn't possibly, we're just too small. We don't have room to do that. So my best advice in terms of having your events or your whatever your publicizing put in Newsday is really know what section of the newspaper is most likely to be home for it, you have to do that by reading the paper. I won't go on because I think probably your questions will be more pertinent to what you really want to know, but I'll just give you a couple of, sort of insider editor, from-my-side-of-the-desk, here's what I do and don't do: I don't return phone calls asking if I got your release, because if I did I wouldn't do anything else all day. I do listen to them, however, and I do look at every release I get, whether it be fax (although, recognize that the faxes just go in the mailbox with the rest

of the mail and come to me, they get there and I don't go through them until the end of the day) I look through all of them; I look through all emails that aren't attachments, if I get an attachment that doesn't have any information on the top of it, it gives me a clue, I don't open it for obvious reasons (I've been ordered not to!) And I don't have time to look at videotapes, I don't go through discs, I just, y'know, we're talking about expediency here. So anything you can do to make our jobs easier by being brief and to the point, that's the way you're going to get your information looked at.

And I think that's it, I'll answer your questions when we're all done.