

## Extra! Extra! COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS ON THE RISE

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Americans complain of free-time starvation and information overload, but they're not too busy to keep up with neighborhood news. The total circulation of community newspapers, defined as general-interest papers published less than four times a week, grew 6 percent between 1996 and 1999 to 48.7 million copies, according to The Editor & Publisher Co., a New York-based firm that tracks the newspaper industry. In that period, 94 community papers were started up. In contrast, E&P reports, circulation of daily newspapers fell by about 800,000 copies, from 56.9 million in 1996 to 56.2 million in 1999. The number of daily newspapers also dropped, from 1,520 dailies published three years ago to 1,489 in 1998. Readers pick up community papers for lots of different reasons, analysts say, but the common interest is a desire to connect to their neighborhoods. "These papers may not have the breaking news, but they do have refrigerator news — articles you can cut out and put on your refrigerator that will affect your family. That's still important to a lot of people," says Ken Allen, executive vice president of the National Newspaper Association, which represents some 4,000 general and special-interest newspapers.

Daily newspapers, whose circulation has flattened out in recent years, understand the trend toward local news, too. Sections and local editions devoted to city neighborhoods and suburban communities are now standard fare in metropolitan papers. In the past, Glick says, the dailies never considered their smaller cousins much of a threat. Today, she says, they're in "head-to-head" competition that will likely increase. According to Veronis Suhler & Associates, a New York investment bank that concentrates on the media and communications industry, advertising spending on weekly newspapers is anticipated to grow 8.6 percent to \$7.5 billion in 2002. The fact that many of the papers are distributed free of charge has contributed to their popularity with advertisers, says Kevin Lavalla, managing director of the bank.

"There had been for years a perception that free-circulation publications were not effective advertising vehicles, but that perception has changed," Lavalla explains. Free papers can offer adver-

tisers nearly 100 percent penetration of a given market and if they're part of a newspaper group, can offer coverage of a large area.

Most community newspapers are concerned with quality-of-life issues for the neighborhood

and in trying to preserve that quality. Community newspapers may lack the edge that characterizes daily reporting, but they can serve the critical function of putting the local community in context with the rest of the world. Many agree

that newspaper should be used to bring about a positive social change. By putting people in touch with one another and writing about the lives of ordinary people as being important runs directly counter to an awful lot of the messages people get in society.

## A Tribute to Leroy Vinnegar and His Music

Atwater's will host the Leroy Vinnegar Tribute on Sunday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 1999 from 4 PM to 9 PM. The Atwater's Trio featuring Mel Brown, Geoff Lee & Andre St. James will play in Leroy's honor as well as special guests such as Teddy Edwards and many other friends of Leroy. The \$25 cover charge will benefit Leroy Vinnegar's Memorial Trust and will include an appetizer buffet prepared by Executive Chef Flynt Payne. Beverages are provided no-host. Contributions will be taken at the

door for The Jazz Society's Leroy Vinnegar Perpetual Scholarship Fund.

The tribute will take place at Atwater's Restaurant & Bar's John Elorriaga Auditorium on the 41<sup>st</sup> floor. Capacity is limited to 400 persons. Reservations will be taken over the phone & pre-paid with a credit card. Tickets sold at the door will be based on availability ("first come, first served").

**FISHBONE**

FRIDAY OCTOBER 15, 30 P

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY  
SMITH MEMORIAL CENTER  
BALLROOM 3RD FLOOR