



TELEVISION PUBLICITY EXECUTIVES COMMITTEE

Summer 2022 Newsletter

TPEC Turns 30!

In honor of TPEC celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, our summer issue is focused on both the past and the future of the organization—and everything in between. Executive committee member Cynthia Lieberman did some solid investigative work, exploring TPEC's three-decades long history, talking with founding members, exploring the organization's original mission statement and *raison d'être*. Also in this edition, we go in-depth with Rebecca Marks, Executive Vice President, Publicity and Communications at Warner Bros. TV Group and a long-time TPEC member. Marks has enjoyed a four-decades long career in TV publicity (mainly at NBC) and she's now helping lead Warner Bros. TV Group as it starts the next chapter in its storied history under new ownership. Additionally, Gabriella Alaimo, Executive Director Media & Talent Relations at Sony Pictures Television, answers some hard-hitting PR-related questions and executive committee member Julie Holland ties the knot. Special thanks to Joy Manion/BanJay Americas for designing the newsletter.

Enjoy!

Dustin Smith & Wendy Zocks, Co-Chairs, TPEC

Q&A with Rebecca Marks

Last spring, Rebecca Marks was named Executive Vice President, Publicity and Communications at Warner Bros. TV Group. In her current role, Marks oversees all consumer publicity, social media, corporate communications and awards initiatives for the now Warner Bros. Discovery-owned studio. As many of you might know, Marks joined Warner Bros. TV after a 37-year run in communications at NBC and NBCUniversal, where she led publicity efforts for NBC's prime



time series, late night, daytime and syndicated programming across nearly four decades, working on hits like Saturday Night Live, Seinfeld, Friends and The Tonight Show with Jay Leno and separately with Jimmy Fallon. A Boston native, Marks moved to California in 1982 and got her start in TV publicity at NBC Entertainment during the Brandon Tartikoff – Grant Tinker era. For many years, Marks served on the TPEC Board and she encourages her Warner Bros. PR staff to actively participate in TPEC panel events. Marks took some time out of her busy schedule to talk to Joe Schlosser about her new gig, her days at NBC and to share some insights on the current state of TV publicity.

Maybe we should start with your thoughts on the current role of the communications/publicity executive in this new world of ours. How have things changed over time from your vantage point?

Through the years, publicity work has gotten a lot more complicated. The time pressures have increased exponentially, so you're never really off the clock. And there are far more outlets covering the entertainment business, with a lot more trade-related sites and fan sites. Beyond that, the consumer press is much more interested in our industry these days. And news that used to get published the next morning now gets posted practically the next minute. All of this impacts what we do inside the company. There's a real mandate to continually inform and update our bosses and colleagues about all these changes and make sure they're as up to speed as possible on how our message is getting out and how we can deliver it most effectively. But the basic mission hasn't really changed. You're serving the company and you're servicing the press, and you have to align those interests so you're getting the company's message out there and the press is getting the information it needs.

In our industry, if you remain in a top communications position for five years, maybe a decade, that's considered a great accomplishment. You were at NBC for nearly 40 years, how do you explain such a successful run to those who might be just starting out in the business? Any tips you can share?

First let me say a word about my current boss Channing Dungey. She is a dream to work for – talented, creative and an extraordinary human being. She cares deeply about the people who work for her and with her and she cares deeply about the product we produce. She is passionate about the creative process. People want to work



with her and that's a quality that I have seen in the great leaders in this industry. So if you are fortunate enough, pick a boss with those qualities.

Now let me address your question about longevity. Once you identify the right place for you, invest in the relationship with the company and its leaders. Learn what makes the company tick, study it, invest time, commitment and passion in what you do for the company. Build relationships and exceed the expectations of the people you work with. Be a valuable, positive employee that they don't want to lose. And of course, don't jump at an offer for a new position just because it offers advancement. If you're doing well in a great position, don't just make a change for change's sake. Make sure it'll be a positive move that genuinely advances your career. And remember, what makes a job great is the people you're working with. When you've got a wonderful job but you don't get along with the people around you, you're going to be miserable. And when you're working with great people, almost any job becomes a great job. I have been so fortunate to work with extraordinary colleagues.



Let's talk about your relatively new role with Warner Bros., a studio you worked closely with for many years at NBC on some of the studio's hits like ER and Friends. Tell us about your team and your key responsibilities?

I inherited an extraordinary team of communications professionals who absolutely know the company and understand its business to an amazing degree. And I've also recruited a few more outstanding team players from among the most talented people I've worked with in the past, as well as identified some promising young newcomers and added them to the department. I've really had access to an incredible wealth of talent. I was lucky to have worked with Warner Bros. for many years and feel very comfortable. My WBVTG job involves a lot of different responsibilities, as you enumerated in your introduction. I'm basically overseeing publicity and social media for all the original scripted programs from Warner Bros. Television and Warner Horizon Scripted Television, as well as handling publicity, marketing and promotion for all the unscripted and alternative projects from Warner Horizon Unscripted Television, Telepictures and Shed Media. And there's a lot more on my plate, including corporate communications and all our awards' season activities.

You've worked closely with many top executives, celebrities, producers

over the years—folks like Jeff Zucker, Jay Leno, Jimmy Fallon and Saturday Night Live creator/producer Lorne Michaels. Do you have any favorite stories that you can share from your time advising them?

I have had the luxury of working with so many great people. I have learned from each of them. There is nothing I love more than hunkering down and working on show strategy or a problem together with my PR colleagues. I love a puzzle and the critical thinking that comes with any challenge. Early in my NBC career, I worked for the legendary communications executive Jay Michaels. He was a larger than life personality. He was smart, well-read and had an irreverent style. At my first press tour executive session, Brandon Tartikoff was getting grilled by the press. Those sessions tended to go longer because he loved the press. Jay Michaels needed to end the session but wasn't having much luck, so he strode to the middle of the stage and grabbed Brandon by the face and planted a kiss. The room erupted with applause and laughter. Mission accomplished. Jay had a unique style that was often untraditional, which I really appreciated.

At the same time, you've been working with many of the same journalists, editors and media for a good duration of your career. How important have those relationships been and how do you maintain those? And how has the PR/journalist dynamic changed with social media?

You always need to remember the needs of a journalist and balance them with the needs of the people you represent. And above all, you have to be honest. Yes, there's always inside information that must remain proprietary, but you have to be upfront about that and never mislead a journalist. Don't make them sorry they dealt with you. Be a facilitator, not a hindrance. If they're sorry they worked with you on a story, the next time they might just leave you out of the loop. It's a cliché in this business, but for a good reason: relationships really are everything. If you want to have input on what gets published, you have to



have credibility and the trust of the people who write and edit that content. And you do it by being helpful, fair and ethical, every time in every interaction.

The dynamic with the press is always changing, with the biggest development being the round-the-clock schedule we all now work on. Way back in the heyday of print newspapers and magazines, there was a daily news

cycle, with deadlines and editions that had gone to bed, and it was possible to go home at 7 p.m. and feel like your work day was truly over. Now the news cycle never really ends. The demands for accuracy, thoroughness and intelligent insight are the same, but you have to accomplish all of that in a fraction of the time. And when you're done with one story, it's always time to move on to the next one and the next and the next. The journalists these days are under pressure to constantly refresh their sites, so you might be working with a reporter on three, four or five stories, when it used to be one a day, maybe two per week.

OK, finally, let's get a little personal with you Rebecca...When you turn off the iPhone, step away from the laptop at the end of the day, what do you like to watch (Dodgers...), read or participate in? Any hobbies to speak of?

I love going on walks with my husband and my golden retriever, Chappy. Nature is the perfect antidote to a hectic, stressful day. There's nothing better than a walk on the beach and time with my family. And as you know, I am a huge sports fan. I started my career with the Boston Celtics. So I love losing myself in a sports game. Though a Boston fan, I have a love for the LA teams too! I think the Dodgers are looking great heading into the end of the season.

TPEC HISTORY

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF TV PUBLICITY

By Cynthia Lieberman

The Television Publicity Executive Committee, or TPEC, was co-founded in 1992 by veteran publicity executives Ben Halpern, Gene Walsh and Barbara Brogliatti to enhance the image and impact of the role of media relations professionals in television.

TPEC is a Los Angeles-based non-profit that was originally formed to address the underlying need for a more organized, collective voice for publicists to help support Hollywood's repeal of the Financial Interest and Syndication Rules ("fin-syn"). There were fewer networks and production companies at that time, and the committee was much smaller and more informal. In 1994, Don DeMesquita, former senior vice president of corporate communications for Sony Pictures Entertainment, took the reins and the roster expanded as publicists from cable, off-network, and PR agencies joined the roster. The next year, changes in industry regulations and relaxation of fin-syn presented an unprecedented emergence of new production companies, station groups, and networks. Libby Gill was elected as the new chair in 1996. Recognizing the need to adapt to the accelerating industry shifts, she treated TPEC more like a professional guild. Under her leadership, bylaws were tightened and enforced, new TPEC initiatives and panel events were created, and proactive senior executives were recruited to help give TPEC real purpose and meaning in the business.

"I was serious about TPEC," admits Gill. "You put me in charge of something and I hold people accountable to taking action. My ultimate goal was to elevate PR people to get a seat at the table, to be strategic partners and to be seen as peers in the business and not just people sitting around waiting to be told what to do. I believed in that and a lot of people on the committee believed and acted on that too."



Ben Halpern



Barbara Brogliatti

Kevin Brockman, former global head of corporate and consumer communications for Disney and WarnerMedia, was a part of TPEC from 1995 through 2003, serving as Chairman of the Committee for a few years towards the end of his active involvement. Brockman recalls, “At the time, TPEC was the communication industry’s answer to more established organizations that targeted marketing and promotion executives. It was a forum for leaders in the art of ‘strategic storytelling’ to share ideas and resources,

a place where business competitors became colleagues and friends. The TPEC Guide was a living example of this effort, something that set us apart from our peers and that proved invaluable for PR neophytes and experts alike.”

One of the key markers at that time was the development of the TPEC Guide, a highly coveted reference directory created to encourage positive working relationships between publicists and the media.

The TPEC guide is the official media directory still being used by most publicists at television networks, studios, and major PR firms, and by independent television and entertainment industry publicists. It lists newspaper and magazine TV editors and critics and entertainment editors, plus producers and booking contacts with all key national radio and TV programs, as well as stations in New York and Los Angeles and radio talk shows in top markets.

In its early inception, former board member Lance Webster recognized the potential of the TPEC Guide, which also includes contact and deadline information about awards competitions for productions. Guided by the support and encouragement of TPEC Chair Brad Turell (WB Network), Webster expanded the content to include the growing number of Internet sites and critics and began selling sponsorship ads. Entertainment Tonight and Parrot Communications became two of its first and strongest supporters. Soon, Webster was marketing and selling the Guide to outside PR firms and independent publicists and at industry conventions such as NATPE.

Turell recalls that “the best ideas are usually the simplest. This was the era that preceded digital, so you had to have numbers written down either in a rolodex or some multipage press list. Lance Webster came to me with the idea to invest in what would become the TPEC Guide and I was smart enough to say yes. We then asked each organization to order two copies to get it launched and the rest as they say is history.”

The expanded and marketed TPEC GUIDE helped put the organization 'on the map,'" explains Webster. "As a result, between 1996 and 2004, TPEC membership more than tripled."

Decades later, the industry is once again evolving at an unprecedented pace and TPEC is evolving with it. During and since the pandemic, TPEC offers monthly virtual events that allow organizations to engage with leading media entertainment sources and TPEC members all around the country. Past events include panels with Variety, Deadline, The Los Angeles Times, "The Today Show," "Entertainment Tonight," "The Kelly Clarkson Show," "Tamron Hall" and "Sirius XM," just to name a few. Moving forward, fostering mutual understanding and positive working relationships between publicists and the media who cover the TV business, and elevating the next generation of communications talent remain a core mission for TPEC. Future initiatives include a publicity mentoring program, sponsored youth scholarships, and more.



Gene Walsh

For more information on TPEC membership order the 2022 TPEC Guide and stay updated on our events, visit our website at www.tpec.tv.

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Warner Bros. Discovery Unveils Communications Team Leadership

Newly installed chief comms officer Nathaniel Brown named leaders across regions and divisions.

BY STAN VLESSING  JULY 21, 2022 12:09PM





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ICM's Brad Turell Joins APA As Chief Communications Officer



By [Helle Anagnostis](#)
July 11, 2022 12:04PM



A message from the booking team at *The Drew Barrymore Show*

With Drew killllllling it on the internet, we're really leaning in on a digital forward content / distribution plan. Our audience is multigenerational (with a very strong, young audience for daytime) and SUPER engaged - they aren't passively watching, they're HOOKED IN and converting, commenting, purchasing, sharing...

SOOO instead of ignoring that success and the data and trends we've seen with our content 2 years into the show.... we're embracing it and dialing into it and disrupting our own format and distribution plan.

WHAT THAT MEANS:

FORMAT

THE DREW BARRYMORE SHOW is optimism TV, bringing information, inspiration, and entertainment to the daytime audience.

Known world-wide for her infectious brand of humor and positivity, host Drew Barrymore shares her undeniably relatable point of view on the show while celebrating every part of humanity along the way.

Drew's creating a movement to march in the army of optimism with a multi-topic format. She elevates, inspires and entertains in every area and in every segment from human interest stories to happy news to lifestyle segments and celebrity guests.

One signature segment featured in every show is "Drew's News," a topical segment where Drew and her co-pilot Ross Mathews break down the day's most surprising and compelling stories from pop culture to human-interest. Funny, informative and inspiring, these stories are curated and shared through Drew's personal lens of heart, humor and optimism.

The format is pretty similar to what it's been, just split into 2 half hours. Each half hour will start with one segment of Drew's News followed by 2 segments of interview in the first half hour; the second half hour will have a bit more variety, sometimes an additional interview, sometimes a lifestyle leaning segment / design / cooking or Human Interest or something more game-driven & comedic.

Drew Barrymore, Jason Kurtz and Marianne Schaberg are executive producers.

DISTRIBUTION

We are still a NATIONAL syndicated show on linear broadcast, cleared across the country airing mostly on CBS. However as mentioned, we are reformatting and breaking the show into 2 half hours and getting really intentional with packaging content the way our audience is consuming it- in some markets the 2 half hours will run back to back (for example in LA the shows will be back to back from 9am-10am), in others they will be 2 stand alone formats and run in different day parts - our digital and social distribution plan will build strategically around hit times and how and when we're impacting in certain markets. It's going to change the syndication game and we'll be active throughout the day, creating and distributing content for social and digital that is designed to travel - both on show and Drew's personal platforms.

Separate from that we'll be leveraging bigger platform partnerships - including an original weekly podcast which we'll record in our podcast room at our studio and can also record remotely. "The Drew Barrymore Show" is not just about getting a daytime hit, it's about storytelling and building bigger cultural moments and conversations.

Celebrity bookings team: Ashley Posimato, ashley@cultivatedent.com, Allie Muhlstock, allie@cultivatedent.com, and Nakiya Morgan, nakiya@cultivatedent.com

Lifestyle bookings team: Jen Stryker, jen.stryker@viacomcbs.com and Jessica Crandall-Clarkin, Jessica.Crandall-Clarkin@cbs.com

TV PR COUPLE TIE KNOT

CBS Communications Vice President and TPEC executive committee member Julie Holland tied the knot earlier this month with Charlie Gardner, Principal, Gardner Global Communications. The two, who met several years ago when they were both working at Endemol Shine, eloped to the Santa Barbara wine country. Congrats!!!





Q&A with Gabriella Alaimo Thomas

Company: Sony Pictures Television

Title: Executive Director, Media & Talent Relations

What was the last TV show you binge-watched? Season 4 of Stranger Things with the family

What's the career highlight you're most proud of? Developing and managing SPT's Emmy campaign for the past two years.

Where do you get your news? Apple News

What's something you're excited about right now? I am excited to watch my oldest daughter start a new chapter in her life as she starts college in the fall.

Who or what inspires you in your career? The diversity of projects I have been able to work on throughout my career has always served as an inspiration.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 17 - Entertainment Weekly featuring Editor-in-Chief Patrick Gomez, Executive Editor Gerrad Hall and Executive Editor Clarissa Cruz

September 7 - "The Sherri Shepherd Show" featuring producers and bookers David Perler, Jawn Murray, Siobhan Schanda and David Batista

2022 MEMBERSHIP INFO

TPEC is a group made up of senior-level PR executives in the TV industry based in Los Angeles, as well as New York and DC, with virtually every major studio, broadcast network, production company and PR agency represented.

- Freelancers (individuals) - \$350
- Small agency - 2-5 employees - \$400
- Mid-size agency - 5-10 employees - \$600
- Large agency - over 10 employees - \$800
- Studios, networks, streamers - \$1,000
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FALL INTERNSHIPS

Is your company offering a summer internship?
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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Do you have a job available at your company? We would like to share that info with the membership. Some of the finest candidates may be right here amongst us!

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CBS

Publicist

GAME SHOW NETWORK

Manager, Publicity & Social Content

STARZ

VP, Publicity (LA)

STARZ

Executive Director, Awards & Talent Relations - (LA or NY)

STARZ

Director, Events Technical Production (LA)

STARZ

Manager, Events (LA)

STARZ

Coordinator, Events, Awards & Talent Relations (LA)

