

THE BRONX

# Journal

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## Editorial

**BRONXNET BETA AWARDS.** Every year for the past five years, The Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation has been hosting the Bronx Excellence in Television Access (BETA) Awards honoring programs produced by local residents of the Bronx. The fifth Annual Beta Award took place at the Lovinger Theater of Lehman College this past October 26. And as he has been for five years in a row, the Master of Ceremonies was the "Bronxite" TV legend and radio personality Joe Franklin, whose quick wit charmed the enthusiastic audience.

The Chairman of Bronxnet, Paul T. Gentile, said, "The commitment, effort and pride reflected in the first shows that went on air in 1993 is still present in the shows that air on Bronxnet today." The list of nominee categories has grown considerably in the past years, and this year included: Music, Talk Show, Documentary, Foreign Language, Education, Youth, Entertainment, Studio Series, Location, Technical, and Community.

In congratulating the nominees of this event, Jim Carney, Executive Director of Bronxnet, Jim Carney, stated, "We salute the hard work and efforts which are reflected in the hundreds of hours of programming and thousands of hours of production time expended by our Family of Producers."

We, at The Bronx Journal also salute the hard work and efforts of Bronxnet for continuing to provide the residents of the Bronx with free access to a vehicle which allows them to air their programs. Bronxnet offers workshops and training as part of their certification program. After completing the program, certified producers can use, free of charge, the Bronxnet studio, equipment, and edit facilities. Bronxnet programs reach about 225,000 cable households in the Bronx over four channels -- 67, 68, 69, and 70-- 24 hours a day.



Jim Carney is the Executive Director of Bronxnet

It was one of the best scripts I had ever read, although completely overdone and implausible. Sex scandals, accusations of payoffs for favors, illegal campaign contributions, candidates under indictment for misuse of funds, accusations of race baiting and anti-Semitism... it read like a treatment for a cheap novel with twists and turns that eventually left the reader exhausted and nauseous.

The most ironic element of the unlikely scenario is that it is true - and it doesn't even involve the national elections (although on one level it did involve a

Clinton). It also all happened right here in our own backyard. A wise person once said that all politics is local, and if politics involves scandal, backstabbing and accusations of corruption, then we had it all in the recent local Bronx elections.

Even setting aside the presidential elections and the heated floor show between Hillary and Rick, local elections for NYS assembly through to the US House of Representatives have provided a virtual alphabet of negativity. In alphabetical order and followed by the appropriate incumbent and challenger, here are some of the accusations (true or otherwise) raised during the campaigns: Adultery (Engle v. Seabrook), Anti-Semitism (Engle v. Seabrook) Bribery (Velella v. Koppell), Corruption (Rosado v. Espada and Vellela v. Koppel) Defamation (just about all of them), Entrapment

(Rosado v. Espada) Fabrications (all), Graft (Velella v. Koppell). Honesty (none), Ignorance (Rosado v. Espada) ... well, you get the idea.

In recent years, Bronx voters were lulled into complacency by a series of local elections which (with the exception of a rare insurgent candidacy) were foregone conclusions by Election Day. It seems that the new millenium has brought with it a wave of discord - and refreshing discourse. While many local observers sit and shake their heads this season, there is something to be said for rocking the boat once in a while.

This recent local campaign season was one for the books in another way, mirroring higher profile U.S. Senate races in New York and New Jersey - in dollars spent. The local congressional, assembly and state

senate races found candidates and challengers dipping deep into their coffers to pay for local cable and broadcast TV ads. Much was also spent on newspaper ads, which often were indiscernible from the editorial content of a few of the local weekly papers.

To paraphrase a previous US Senator from New York also accused of being a carpetbagger... Some local pundits look on all this brouhaha and say "Why?." I look on it and say "Why not?." The most important result for all the excitement is that people are once again paying a little bit more attention to the men and women of City Hall, Albany and Capitol Hill who are there to represent us. The are also there because we put them there. And it pays to remind them of that fact, even if it only happens at election time.

## Letters to the Editor

### On the Children Section

When are you going to bring the Children Section back?

One of the reasons I like your newspaper is the pages dedicated to the children. You used to have a whole section; now I see that this was reduced to only two pages. I loved the page about the Bronx history, but it disappeared. What a pity!

Brenda Mendes

### On Local Coverage

I have been reading The Bronx Journal for a couple of years now. I am impressed with the many improvements of the paper, especially the students articles on the local section. This November issue, for example, has a number of articles which are well written and most interesting.

The main story, "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow," (A better title could have been 'Here Yesterday, Gone Today') by Ronald González, is a perfect example of what civic journalism is all about. I didn't know that the missing fountain from Old

Boro Hall Park is now at City Hall in Manhattan. Mr. González does a good job in relating what happened. As he points out, the fountain, which had been at Old Boro Hall Park for nearly 80 years "was taken away in broad daylight and without warning." The justification for such an act seems to be, according to a press officer for Mayor Rudy Giuliani, the restoration of City Hall Park, original home of the fountain. It was sad to read the comments of one of our residents who had enjoyed the fountain all of his life, and then "poof, it was gone."

Give and take back? I hope our Borough President Freddy Ferrer will look into this issue and clarify it better for us.

The articles by Ms. Maria Castro about "La Bella Strada" and the Bronx swimmer Donstan Charles are also worthy of praise. Indeed, Arthur Avenue, named after the great conductor Arturo Toscanini, who lived there, is bringing back a piece of Italy to the area. Miss Castro's story about the Bronx swimmer whose hopes to represent Dominica were chattered, was also a well written piece. In Sports, Greg Van Voorhis article

about Yankee pitcher Mariano Rivera is yet another sample of excellence of the writing capacity of Lehman students. He is most knowledgeable in sports, especially basketball, baseball and football. Keep up the good work.

Andrew Stern

### Welcome Gary Axelbank

I was glad to read that Mr. Gary Axelbank is a faculty member of the Multilingual Journalism and Mass Communication Department. A smart move on the part of Lehman College. I'm certain he will be an inspiration for your students.

Herbert Molinari

Letters to the Editor must include your name, address, and telephone number so we can verify your comments. The letters may be edited to conform to space limitations. Readers may also send comments via e-mail to: tbj@lehman.cuny.edu



## Commentary

# One For The Books