



BMNAR's 90th Anniversary Banquet: What a feeling!

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By Eliezer Rodriguez

The week of April 21st is a week I will not soon forget. It was one of those rare and wonderful weeks where you have a few exciting surprises mixed in with knowing that everything in the office turned out as planned. At the end of the week you whisper to yourself - "It's great to be alive."

Monday, April 21st, Janine Schall, my office manager, and I finalized the journal for our 90th Anniversary Annual Banquet that took place on April 24th. We were both feeling good that in spite of all the last minute changes, we met our deadline. Moments later, I was on my way to watch my 9-year-old son, Cristian Rodriguez, play baseball. He was not scheduled to be the pitcher, but there he was on the mound taking his warm up tosses. My son is a good pitcher for his age and even a better first baseman. When the game was over, I experienced a new "dad feeling." My son pitched a no-hitter. He struck out 17 of a possible 18 batters in a complete game performance. Cristian struck out every batter in every inning except for one inning where the batter bounced the ball back to him and he threw the batter out at first. In that game, Cristian got 18 assists and was directly responsible for all 18 outs made by the other team. That, my friends, was the most dominating baseball performance I have ever seen. God bless my boy!

The next day, Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda, from the 87th Assembly District in The Bronx, confirmed that he was coming to meet and greet my board of governors at our monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 23rd. The Assemblyman was well prepared and did impress my board of governors. In celebration of our 90th Anniversary, he presented us with Three Citations. One Citation was for The Bronx-Manhattan North Association of Realtors (BMNAR) for the financial support that we provided to Alexandra Valle, a Bronx 10th grader, selected as Junior Statesman of America, to attend a prestigious summer program at Georgetown University. The second Citation was presented to Rubin Pikus, CEO of Millbrook Properties, for donating his \$10,000 winnings prize for his hole-in-one to two charities; among them Camp Good Days and Special Times. The final Citation was presented to Mark Engel, president of Langsam Property Services Corp., for helping Camp Good Days and Special Times raise over \$250,000 in the past 25 years and giving back to those children and families affected by cancer. I believe BMNAR has a new friend in Assemblyman Sepulveda.

It is now April 24th and our 90th Anniversary Annual Banquet is hours away. I finished all my back-and-forth and it was time to play host. Over 450 members and friends came to celebrate this special moment in our rich history. I was given the honor of introducing the chairman of the Banquet Committee, William Schur. As part of my introduction I turned back the clock 90 years and shared with my guests that the average home in 1924 sold for \$2,500. 1924 was also the year that New York Yankee great, Lou Gehrig replaced Wally Pipp to begin his 2,130 consecutive games streak that eventually earned him the name "The Iron Horse."

Schur did a great job in planning our 90th Anniversary celebration. Adolfo Carrion, Jr., former Bronx president and CEO/managing director of Metro Futures, LLC, delivered the invocation and his words were heartfelt. Among the honorees for the evening, the honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr., The Bronx Borough president, received the Community Leadership Award, and reminded us that The Bronx is celebrating its centennial throughout 2014. My wife and two boys were also present and, you guessed it, I had to share my son's no-hitter story with the guests. Among my guests were my friends from the New York State Association of Realtors (NYSAR): JP Endres, president of NYSAR; Michael Smith, NYSAR president-elect; Duncan MacKenzie CEO of NYSAR; and, Lisbeth English, NYSAR regional vice-president.

On behalf of BMNAR, I want to congratulate Jim Slattery, Original Energy, for receiving the President's Award. I want to thank everyone who came out to support our association. I want to thank all for your kind words on my son's no-hitter. I will let you know when the Yankees come calling. Our next event is the President's Cocktail Party and that is scheduled for May 22nd, at F & J Pine Restaurant, Bronx. Our president, Richard Guarino, Friedman-Roth Realty Services LLC, has done a magnificent job of leading and promoting the interest of BMNAR. Guarino deserves a great showing at his Cocktail reception. Our president-elect, Kathy Zamechansky, KZA Realty Group, Inc., is also looking forward to seeing you at Guarino's reception. If you are interested in attending, call my office at (718) 892-3000 and reserve your spot.

It was a great week and I had a great time at BMNAR's 90th Anniversary Annual Banquet! What a great way to begin the next 90 years. One last thing, don't forget to invest in RPAC.

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