



## **Message from CEO of Bronx-Manhattan North Assn. of Realtors: Mom and Pop, where are you? - by Eliezer Rodriguez**

November 06, 2018 - Front Section

Can you believe it? 2018 will soon come to an end. My, how time flies when you are having fun! Well, it hasn't all been fun. This year has had its challenges, but we continue to meet those challenges head on and with a smile. One challenge, however, continues to need more attention or we will lose the Bronx flavor. Long time small businesses are closing and leaving our neighborhoods with vacant store fronts.

Last year, The Bronx County Historical Society presented me with The Bronx Business Award. In my remarks, I encouraged the guests to pay more attention to the needs of the Bronx and to help make the Bronx the best it can be. To make the Bronx better, we need to support our local businesses. As our Mom and Pop shops close, we lose the products and the essential services they provide. Notwithstanding the jobs that are lost, those jobs are usually held by someone who lives in the community, who then pumps their salary back into their community. Small businesses have helped to build our communities. Once closed, we lose an invaluable part of that community's flavor.

The Bronx Manhattan North Association of Realtors (BMNAR) is considered a small business. Over the years, we have lost members to bigger Realtor associations. Like most small businesses, we provide an invaluable service to the communities we serve. Small businesses must take a more aggressive approach to let their voices be heard because our communities need us.

Earlier this year, I joined councilman Mark Gjonaj at a rally on the steps of city hall. Councilman Gjonaj serves as the chairman of the committee on small business. The committee has jurisdiction over New York City matters relating to retail business and emerging commercial industries. The councilman has made it clear that he is committed to exploring all options that will help small businesses thrive.

Councilman Gjonaj is also a Realtor. A Realtor by definition is a real estate professional with a membership in any Realtor association. The councilman is a member of BMNAR and I know first-hand he fights to preserve the American dream of home ownership. If you are a Realtor with an office in The Bronx and your membership is not BMNAR, it's time for you to come home. BMNAR is your local Realtor home. We are your Realtor family and your dues will build and preserve our neighbor's right to own a home. Not having a BMNAR membership is a clear indication that you can do more to make the Bronx better. Let me remind you "there is no place like home."

BMNAR still has two events before the year ends; so get ready to mark your calendars. The 4th annual legislative breakfast with members of the city council is scheduled for Wednesday, November 28, at the Pelham Bay Diner, 1920 E Gun Hill Rd., Bronx. The breakfast will run from 8:30 am to 10:30 am. The event is free and limited to the first 50 people to RSVP. The moderator for the panel discussion will be Gary Axelbank, the host of BronxTalk. Last year, the panelists were council members: Ritchie Torres (Dist. 15); Andrew Cohen (Dist.11); Annabel Palma (Dist. 18); and, Rafael Salamanca, Jr. (Dist. 17).

The holiday season is quickly approaching and so is our 34th annual holiday party and toy drive. You are invited to join the "Who's Who" in the real estate world by celebrating your company's holiday party with us at the elegant Marina del Rey Caterers, located on the shores of the Long Island Sound, at One Marina Dr., Bronx, on December 12. The evening will be full of laughter, networking, and 4 ½ hours of unlimited premium buffet, drinks, and dancing.

For more information, to join or renew your membership, to get a sponsorship or inquire about advertising opportunities, please contact me or Janine Mosher at (718) 892-3000, or via e-mail: [E.Rodriguez@BMAR.org](mailto:E.Rodriguez@BMAR.org) or [j.mosher@BMAR.org](mailto:j.mosher@BMAR.org).

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