

Arts reporter named O&E 'journalist of year'



Honored: Eccentric Newspapers' arts reporter Frank Provenzano (left) was recently honored as the company's Journalist of the Year. He received his award from Philip Power, chairman of the HomeTown Communications Network, Inc.

Head bowed, arts reporter Frank Provenzano thankfully accepted an accolade from his peers recently — the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers' Journalist of the Year award.

"Frank is in the process of creating a new genre of journalism," said Philip Power, chairman of HomeTown Communications Network Inc., the O & E's parent company.

"And the guy writes like an angel," Power said, addressing O & E editorial staff and executives who attended the company's annual award ceremony.

Unlike traditional arts coverage, Power credited Provenzano with melding community and art, emphasizing and supporting their relationship.

A graduate of Michigan State University, Provenzano has been writing about the arts for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers since early 1997, shortly after the group launched its Sunday edition.

A resident of Grosse Pointe Woods, 38-year-old Provenzano has written for the Detroit Free Press, Crain's Detroit Business and the Metro Times. "I'm just so pleased that people are really taking the arts seriously," he said. "The arts are really a vehicle for self development and they're also a way that many communities develop civic pride and identity."

While praising Provenzano's literary writing style and in-depth treatment of arts and community, O & E Taste/Entertainment section editor Keely Wygonik also noted his leadership and advocacy skills.

Provenzano is credited with organizing three local forums on the National Endowment for the Arts' "American Canvas Report," a probe into the viability and survival of the nation's arts groups.

Stepping beyond the role of reporter, Provenzano united local arts organizations in discussion — many for the first time, Wygonik said.

Also nominated for the annual award were: Redford Observer reporter Bill Casper; West Bloomfield Eccentric reporter Greg Kowalski; Rochester-Clairmont Eccentric reporter Sharon Dargatz; Westland Observer reporter Darrell Clem; arts reporter Linda Chomina and community life reporter Christina Fuoco.

The event was held May 21 at the Italian American Club, Livonia.

Featured speakers included Tim Richard, a recent inductee into the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame and director of HomeTown Communications' Regional News Service and writer, columnist and journalism faculty member at Wayne State University Jack Lessenberry.



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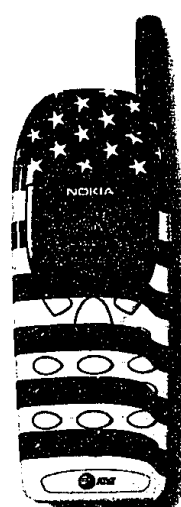
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