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## “Sidewalks Entertainment: A TV Show with Longevity”

*Producers continuing series with a newer version for broadcast stations*



**Richmond, CA – November 5, 2006** – San Francisco Bay Area viewers may have seen the show, but they might not be aware that the local entertainment program is a long-running series that has accomplished more than most national and regional series combined.

“It’s so hard to believe that our first episode premiered so long ago. It feels like yesterday when I was assembling the crew and lining up our first guests,” says Richard R. Lee, who, in 1988, created a different *Sidewalks Entertainment*, a local performer showcase that evolved into a mixture of national music, artistic and novelty acts, Bay Area performers, and interviews with Hollywood celebrities.

With more than 600 episodes edited under the *Sidewalks* banner, which includes spin-off music video series *Sidewalks: Video Nite*, the award-winning talk, music, and variety series has been a longtime staple for the local audience . . . producing away without much fanfare.

“In a way, *Sidewalks* has been the unknown *Tonight Show* for the Bay Area,” remarks Lee, 40, the show’s executive producer and one of the on-air personalities. “Although we have somewhat of a cult following with viewers, we have been doing this series on our own without the publicity and budget of a big time network produced show. It is remarkable for a show like *Sidewalks* to do what it has done for so many years and continue to grow in segments and interviews. New viewers are discovering *Sidewalks* each day.”

What the main producers and hosts have done is pretty remarkable if you look at the program’s lineup.

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### **Celebrities and More**

Celebrity interviews have been the main attraction to *Sidewalks* for the last several years, with names you might find on a guest list for Jay Leno’s late-night show and not a locally produced program. A roll call of stars from movies, TV and music have appeared on the show, including Rob Schneider, Bill Paxton, Catherine Bell, Hallie Kate Eisenberg, Teri Garr, Phil Collins, The Judds, Yanni, Hank Azaria, Donny and Marie Osmond, Molly Sims, Claudia Schiffer, Shaquille O’Neal, Gloria Stuart, Sara Evans, Patty Loveless, Tracy Lawrence, Joy Behar, Meredith Vieira, Scott Bakula, rock group Barenaked Ladies, and the late Tito Puente.

In the past couple of years, the show had exclusive interviews with NASCAR racers Jeff Gordon, Richard Petty, Jon Wood, Bobby Labonte; singers Josh Groban, Blu Cantrell, Floetry, Isaac Hayes, Natalie Imbruglia; musician John Tesh; TV hosts Melissa Rivers, Stacy London, Robin Leach; and actors Vanessa Marcil (*Las Vegas*), Doris Roberts (*Everybody Loves Raymond*), Robert Englund (“Nightmare on Elm Street” films), Robert Wagner and Stefanie Powers (*Hart To Hart*), Dom DeLuise, Courtney Thorne-Smith (*According to Jim*), and Debbie Reynolds.

In 2003, *Sidewalks* added an East Coast presence to the program. Rafael Siegel, a personality from the 1994 season, was conducting his own exclusive interviews and performing comedy bits from the Atlantic Ocean side. He interviewed singers Wyclef Jean, Heather Headley, Nodesha; rap performers Gang Starr, Cassidy, Rosco P. Coldchain, Youngbloodz; and rock group Adema. In 2005, Siegel returned to the West Coast and joined the current hosts in front of the camera.

Even as a locally produced show with no network affiliation ties, *Sidewalks* has been on the landscape for timely celebrity interviews, including the popularity of reality TV stars.



Above: Some of the faces of stars that appeared on “Sidewalks”



*Sidewalks* current hosts (pictured clockwise, top):  
Richard R. Lee, Eve Galazin, Rafael Siegel,  
Cindy Rhodes, and Eboni Warning

“Host Cindy Rhodes interviewed Aaron and Helene from the ABC reality hit, *The Bachelor* (two days after Aaron announced to the world that he picked Helene), says Lee during the taping of an episode. “*The Bachelor* couple was on *Good Morning America*, *The Late Show with David Letterman*, and *The View* on Thursday and on Friday, *Sidewalks*. Cindy then went on to interview the winners of NBC’s *Average Joe* and Christopher Knight and Adrienne Curry from VH1’s *My Fair Brady*.”

According to Rhodes, a member of the show since 1993, who has done a majority of the show’s interviews, “I think that the celebrity interviews are the heart and soul of *Sidewalks*. We have been fortunate in speaking to some really great people.”

In addition to the interviews, *Sidewalks*, which won several programming awards including 1995’s Best Entertainment Show by Bay Area Cable Excellence

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(BACE), is also known for spotlighting local music groups, cultural performers, and artistic and novelty acts. Acrobatic roller skaters, footbag world champions, rock climbing dancers, first-time skydivers, fashion designers, and belly dancers with snakes are just some of the interesting segments that populated the episodes.

The *Sidewalks* team has also been seen at award shows and other events, including the annual California Music Awards, WonderCon, the Renaissance Pleasure Faire, Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus, and the National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE) and the National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) conventions.



### **Strong Web Presence**

Besides the television show, the program's website [www.SidewalksTV.com] is also becoming a stronger on-line property. Along with contents about the show and hosts, the site houses a large collection of celebrity interviews and show segments, which can be seen at anytime with a left double click on the mouse.

We digitized many of our recent interviews to the website," says Lee, who is also the show's webmaster. "It's so cool to see these people come to our site from around the world. It's also exciting to search websites and find out that other people have been talking about our interviews and adding links to us. *Sidewalks* is becoming a destination point for

celebrity interviews."

Rhodes adds, "The great thing about the website is that it is one of the few ways we really can communicate and talk to our viewers from all over the world. They are honest and upfront about what they like and aren't afraid to tell us what they don't like. We take those comments very seriously and look forward to all responses so we can continue to tool our show to meet the needs of our viewers."

### **A New Version Planned**

The current team is planning a newer version of *Sidewalks Entertainment* for broadcast stations. Along with the celebrity interviews and music, the producers plan to add more regional elements, as well as segments to help aspiring performers who want to make it in show business.

Lee states that their goal is to launch a new version in 2007. To reach that goal, the team is searching for more key players and added some new behind-the-scenes members, including music producer Dwayne Sparks of Sparks Entertainment Management Group. In late 2005, the team produced a new "test pilot," which sported new graphics and theme song. Currently, the team is pitching the show to station's



Production member Christian Wimmer shoots actor Malcolm-Jamal Warner's band, Miles Long

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programmers.

“I can't wait for the launch,” says Rhodes. “It is exciting to bring *Sidewalks* to a much broader audience base. So many shows on TV now are copies of the shows already on the air. *Sidewalks* is different in that our show will straddle both the local and national entertainment scene, as well as provide a longer form interview style which is rarely done in TV today. *Sidewalks* has been successful in the markets in which it has aired, and I believe this is just the beginning for us.”

The *Sidewalks* team is working hard in the hopes of bringing diverse and quality entertainment to the Bay Area audience and beyond.

Currently, the cable version of *Sidewalks Entertainment* can be seen throughout the Bay Area, including Oakland, Berkeley, Concord, and Walnut Creek. San Francisco viewers can watch the show on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays at 7:30pm on Comcast cable 29. Richmond viewers are able to watch the show daily on KCRT Ch. 28.

For more information, please email the show at [info@SidewalksTV.com](mailto:info@SidewalksTV.com).

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