

# Letters TO ARTVOICE

## EPISTLES TO BRUCE JACKSON

I hope I speak for all teachers, educators and every citizen of Buffalo in giving you thanks for bringing to light the corruption of Carl Paladino ("Paladino Writes," *Artvoice* 5/33). Your response to him showed your own intelligence, decency under fire and human respect, while his own words prove him to be a viper. He typifies the fascist mentality that hates questioning of his right to deceive the public trust and destroy communal property. He has to resort to threats, vulgarity and denial because you caught him in his lie. He resembles in these traits the present national leadership. Thanks for the unveiling of another corporate thief.

Ray Peterson  
Buffalo

The recent email exchange published in *Artvoice* between Carl Paladino and Bruce Jackson is enlightening in only one way; that we, as a community, tolerate and even celebrate the actions and attitudes of developers, in ways that we would not tolerate in two-year-olds.

Between the recent reports of the Amherst bully, I mean developer, who cuts down trees illegally and stalks residents who disagree with his view of his property rights, and Paladino, one wonders what level of juvenile behavior and two-bit

name-calling we will tolerate as a substitute for real dialogue.

Mr. Paladino refused to answer a simple question about what drives his support for the casino. Instead, like many who want to run roughshod through development in Western New York, he takes the low road by calling Bruce Jackson an asshole, among other names. This is a tiring and typical ad hominem attack, meant to divert attention to the fact that he won't or can't answer a simple question about economics and public policy, in the face of real data about gambling.

I'm not writing to defend Bruce Jackson, even against those who think that his work is diverting attention from other issues. I think Jackson's work has delved more deeply into the issues he works on than anyone; further, he asks difficult questions and gets answers to those questions.

But really, whether or not Carl Paladino likes limo liberals or public employees or not, he should answer the questions, instead of calling folks names. And we, as a community, should ask what behavior we expect of those who are self-appointed to lead community developments.

Since I earn my keep on the public payroll, I am sure that's an easy way to dismiss my community contributions or my opinions. But I'd rather have a discussion about the facts and research about public policy, and not about personal pro-

clivities. This community deserves a substantive discussion, and it is Bruce Jackson's work that provides the ability to have that discussion, without name-calling.

Joe Gardella  
Buffalo

I read Carl Paladino's recent e-mails to Dr. Jackson with disbelief, amusement and horror. His combination of profanity, insults, poor grammar and threats is not what one hopes for in a community leader.

Timm Otterson  
Buffalo

As petty as Bruce Jackson got with Carl Paladino, I cannot help but be amazed at how "on track" the article was. I own a restaurant and 100 apartments. I'm 39 and have been a business person in Buffalo since I was 20. I am not 30 percent of Carl but he is by far the only decent one of that crowd, in my opinion. All the other "partnership elite" want to do is get free money from the government and build buildings we do not need and compete with guys like me who get nothing but big tax bills from the government.

Yes, Mr. Jackson, Carl got off point, but you public teachers are paid an average of \$10,000 dollars a year more than the national average. In Buffalo there are 4,000 teachers in public schools. That is \$40 million dollars a year more we must pay for Buffalo alone than most other cities. Had that money been spent better all these years we would not need a casino or anything else to help our economy. Remember too that these teachers work nine months of six-hour days for an average of \$50,000 a year. If you convert that to 12 months of 10-hour days, their pay is around \$100,000 dollars a year. They send their own kids

by and large to private schools and they often do not live in the city. College professors have an even better deal. So you see, Mr. Jackson, while Carl should not have attacked you personally for being a public school teacher for 40 years, he was right in blaming the teachers for our bad economy and need for a casino. I don't like the casino idea but also wish you guys would agree to concessions or take your master's degrees in English and history and try to get a job somewhere else.

Ron Cauley  
Buffalo

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The referenced letter from Carl Paladino to Bruce Jackson did not explicitly blame the region's economic woes on high teacher salaries. Bruce Jackson is a professor at the University at Buffalo (as is another letter writer, Joseph Gardella), not a teacher at Buffalo Public Schools, where the average salary is \$54,000—a salary that takes 11 to 15 years to achieve. The top pay rate is about \$77,000; it takes 27 years to get there. There are 3,500 teachers in Buffalo Public Schools, whose average workday is nothing so short as the six hours and 50 minutes that they are required to be in the classroom each day; most economists agree that teachers work as many hours in a week as their college-educated peers, possibly more. Buffalo Public School teachers work 10-month contracts and are required to live in the city of Buffalo. Using current federal standards, public schools succeed or fail nationwide in a pattern that suggests well paid teachers can't hurt and might help. Figures could not be found to support or disprove the writer's claim that most Buffalo Public Schools teachers send their kids to private schools, but a quick, unscientific survey suggests that he's wrong about that.

Artvoice reserves the right to edit letters for content and length. Shorter letters have a better chance at being published in their entirety. Please include your name, hometown, and contact number. E-mail letters to: [editorial@artvoice.com](mailto:editorial@artvoice.com) or write to: Artvoice Letters, 810 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14202



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