

## TELEVISION

# What do you watch and why: Jerry Cammarata

If you're over 60, you probably remember Andy Devine as the driver in the classic film "Stagecoach," a series of B melodramas and/or Cookie Bullfincher, Roy Rogers' sidekick in some late 1940s horse operas.

If you're considerably younger, as is Commissioner Jerry Cammarata of Youth and Community Development, you may know Devine only as the host of a TV kiddie show, "Andy's Gang," and/or as Jingles, sidekick to Guy Madison's "Wild Bill Hickok," also on the small screen.

Of course there may be readers who don't remember him at all.

Devine was a rotund character actor best known for his high-pitched, not-quite-raspy voice (the result of his falling with a stick in his mouth as a child). His career spanned six decades, 1926 until his death in 1977.

Cammarata, who is also Staten Island's representative on the Board of Education, doesn't get to watch much television these days, so reached back to his childhood when we asked him to name his all-time favorite shows.

He spoke of the tricks pulled by Froggy the Gremlin and mentioned Midnight, the musical cat, both key members of "Andy's Gang," a Saturday morning fixture in the mid-



"The Late Show" with David Letterman appears weeknights at 11:35 p.m. on CBS.

1950s. At one point, he exclaimed, "Boing goes the magic froggy" and we assumed he was recalling something from "Andy's Gang."

Cammarata said his TV watching now begins about 11:30 p.m. and may last a couple of hours "until I fall asleep." And he goes for light fare. "After a full day's work, I really want to be entertained," he said.

"I prefer to watch a good movie, perhaps a western," he continued. Absent a good film, he may tune in to the David Letterman show. Asked if he chooses Letterman over Jay Leno, Cammarata was emphatic. "That's a no-brainer," he said. "Letterman absolutely!"

"I never watched Milton Berle," he said, underscoring his unique taste in TV fare, "but I was mesmer-



Jerry Cammarata

ized by Bishop Sheen."

Fulton J. Sheen was a Roman Catholic archbishop when he died in 1979. A brilliant orator, he started on radio in the 1930s with a program called "The Catholic Hour" and moved to television in 1952 with "Life Is Worth Living."

— MIKE AZZARA