

# Literary Career Launched in a Cab

BY SUZANNE SIEGEL

Who needs a literary agent when you have a cab? Not Clodomiro Giraud, Jr.

Giraud, a Queens Village deli owner who until recently worked as a cabbie in Manhattan, used his yellow taxi to promote his idea for a children's book about the coconut characters he loved to sketch.

One day as he zigged in and out of traffic, he picked up as luck would have it an editor.

"I said, 'I have a manuscript,' and he said, 'Good. I'm an editor,'" Giraud said, as he rang up a six-pack of Budweiser at his Coconut Deli & Grocery on Hillside Avenue and 218th Street. He bought the deli six months ago.

That encounter led to the publication of his first book, "Meeting the Coconut Family" about tropical island people whose trees have stopped growing coconuts.

After publication, Giraud was sure to keep his cab stocked with copies of the book, which he showed to whomever he thought might be interested.

Among his passengers, Jackie Mason and Spike Lee were some of the more famous people to become acquainted with the tale of the coconutless Coconut Island.

His big break came when Giraud was lucky enough to pick up a woman who worked for Fox Television's "Good Day New York."

"She said, 'How would you like to do a show?' and I said, 'Hey, I'm down,'" said Giraud, a colorful character who was born in Puerto Rico, grew up in the neighborhood of Hillside and 188th St and now lives above his deli.

Next thing you know Fox Television personality Gordon Elliot was promoting



Clodomiro Giraud, Jr., Queens Village deli owner and author.

ing two stuffed animal coconut people onto his shoulders.

Right now, Giraud has prototypes of the coconut people ready to be manufactured, a coconut theme song, an almost-completed sequel called "Coconut Island Part II Returning Home," coconut people popcorn and T-shirts. Plans for a movie and a television show spin-off are also in the works.

"I will cause a coconut explosion — trust me," he said. "I am building a package. What we've got here is a tremendous package."

Giraud, who has worked in a law firm, owned a liquor store in the Bronx, and performed as an amateur stand-up comic, said he has always had a penchant for storytelling.

"I used to make up stories in school and kids thought I was reciting movie a saw, but I was making it up out of my own head," Giraud said. "You could drop a penny and I could come up with a story about it. It's fun. It just works. It just does."

Giraud said after the first line of his book hit him, the words never stopped flowing.

"It became a magnetic force of information," he said.

The 57-page book is "directed toward moral values, which in New York have been taken away in the name of greed," he said. "It also teaches kids to care for the environment and that helping often brings rewards."

*Send Us Your  
News and Views!*