

President's Corner
CSJ President's Message

We all mourn the passing of Farther Donald Licata. This very unique person touched us all, collectively and individually. His spiritual guidance led the Order for many years. I feel particularly fortunate to have had the foresight to own a copy of the pamphlet he prepared of all the prayers he had written, suitable for every occasion. He is always in our prayers.

The latest news story splashed across almost every newspaper and featured by newscasters, was the return of the "Sopranos". This horrendous series has received more free publicity, than any other show, that I can ever remember. The CSJ has written letters to HBO and newspapers, that tout the show, all to no avail. Why – because it's a money-maker and scruples apparently do not overcome the "bottom line." What is more hurtful is that many Italian Americans, in prominent positions, publicly admit that they watch the show and like it. We were recently e-mailed remarks made by the President of NIAF, who stated to a New York Times columnist that he "enjoyed the show" among other remarks. The CSJ will be sending a letter to NIAF concerning these remarks. A Newsday reporter, Christine Armario, contacted OSIA members asking for comments. Kudo's to Mary Ann Rispoli, President of the Michael Valente Lodge in Long Beach, who stated, "I don't know of anyone who acts like that, the language is appalling, in the Sons of Italy we never speak like that." Yet, another member, who wished to remain anonymous, because she was "afraid of retaliation" stated that she would be watching the show." Her thoughtless remark certainly contributes towards public opinion that "all Italians have a mob mentality." In her article, Armario also wrote, "Italian Americans whose compatriots have raised objections to the show's depiction of Italians as mobsters – found discreet ways of watching."

I am pleased to report that a small headline in the Daily News, Wednesday, March 15, 2006 states, "***Sopranos' Shocker: Low Rating.*** The bang you heard Sunday Night wasn't just Tony Soprano hitting the floor,..... but also the ratings for HBO's *The Sopranos'* **tumbling. According to Nielsen Media Research statistics, the show is down by almost 3 Million viewers since 2004.**" This is good news!!

What can we as an individual do about this travesty? Write letters to the editors of newspapers such as the Daily News, Newsday or any local newspaper that touts the showing of the Sopranos. Write to HBO, protesting this program, cancel the cable channel, if you are paying for it come into your home and let them know why you are canceling. No other ethnic group would or should tolerate a program that depicts their family life in this extremely dysfunctional manner. We Italian Americans know that this does not fairly represent us, however, many of our fellow Americans have come to believe that this is actually Italian American family life!

The beautiful city of Torino, Italy was televised throughout the world, when it hosted the 2006 Winter Olympics. Newscasters, covering the Olympic events, revealed many historical facts about Torino or in Piedmontese – Turin. Did you know that in 1861, Turin became the capital of the newly proclaimed United Italy? As industrialization progressed, 1899 FIAT was founded in Turin. The Universal Exposition, the pinnacle of Art Nouveau design, was held in Turin in 1902. They are well known for their chocolate. Torino has also become a center for the aerospace industry – among many other things!! How proud we all were that this beautiful city in Italy was chosen for the Winter Olympics and that Italy and Italians were viewed by the world in a very positive manner.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our State and National Officers, Lodge Presidents and members, who attended our annual dinner honoring our Immediate Past President Santina Haemmerle and Nassau County Executive, Thomas Suozzi. We also thank those members who supported our journal and participated in our raffles. This was a well-deserved honor for Santina, who dedicated many years to the CSJ and served as our President for four years. Thomas Suozzi has always actively supported the Italian American Community. We thank them for all their efforts. We also thank the Committee, who helped make this affair a success, Josephine Cohen, Eleanor Jabbogy, Enrico Annichiarico, Camille Annichiarico, Natale Mannino, Marjorie Moschella and Josephine Truglio. We have a great team – and we also thank all the members of our Executive Board, District Chairpersons and liaisons. They do a wonderful job!

Our next event is our CSJ – B’Nai B’rith Breakfast to be held on **Sunday, May 7, 2006** at the Marriott Hotel in Uniondale, NY. The CSJ honoree for this breakfast is Oyster Bay Town Supervisor, John Venditto, who is also a member of the Columbus Lodge. The B’Nai B’rith honoree, is Rabbi Ted Tsuruoka of Great Neck. Save the date – detailed information will be sent out shortly.

Our Video Tape Library list has been completed. The CSJ has combined our Video Tape Library with the Garibaldi Meucci Museum library and we now have a very comprehensive library on various subjects – both on VHS and DVD. We are building the library to include more contemporary films such as “I’m Staying With My Boys,” Sergeant, John Basilone’s heroic tale and “The Great Raid,” Col. Henry Mucci’s rescue of the prisoners in Bataan. We welcome donations of films, (VHS or DVD), that would be appropriate for our library. Information on the library and how to borrow the films will be circulated shortly.

Our website has been updated thanks to the efforts of Terry Tanzer, a member of the Loggia Glen Cove, who has graciously volunteered his time to keep us current. Please visit our web site at <http://www.nyscsj-osia.org/>

Remember if you are a member of OSIA you are a member of the CSJ!!!