



The Officers' Log

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LA CASA: AWAITING THE JUDGE

As we reported in the November Log our attorneys have filed a counter motion against Columbia University in the matter of *La Casa Italiana*. The motion requests that Judge Marcy Friedman of the New York State Supreme Court allow us to present oral arguments in defense of our contention that *La Casa* is not being utilized as the Paterno Family and the Italian American community wished it to be when it was donated in 1927.

The motion also calls for an accounting of two endowments established at that time as well as the restoration of the 20,000 volume Paterno book collection to the building.

DUES DAY

We have enclosed an invoice and return envelope for your annual dues. Those of you who paid early or joined mid-year will see a pro-rata amount to pay. We have kept the annual dues at \$50.

Although all officers are volunteers we need to pay for technical services, printing and office supplies. The Italic Institute is debt-free and rent-free. We are totally independent of other organizations and the Italian government. Only your dues and donations keep our voice and work alive.

ANY SURPRISES HERE? NOT REALLY



NJ Gov. Chris Christie may have overdone his tough guy schtick.



Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel may be the first crossover "Godfather." (See page 2 "Crossover" for this story)

By Anthony Vecchione

Time Magazine believes that Christie is "The Boss" because of his leadership during Hurricane Sandy and how he put his state above partisan politics by personally welcoming President Obama's federal disaster relief, a move that irritated some members of the GOP who saw his embrace of the president as disloyal.

However, Christie was not pleased by the unflattering photo the editors used on the cover. Radio personality Don Imus said that the photo made Christie look like fictional television gangster Tony Soprano.

Christie jokingly told Imus, "I'm reporting them [*Time* editors] to the anti-Italian defamation league," and, "he couldn't wait for his kids to come home and see it."

When asked by Imus what the reference to the "Boss" might be about, Christie said: "he wasn't sure," but that he thought, "they are trying to make some kind of point."

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CROSSOVER MAYOR

This month, Institute president Bill Dal Cerro chided both *Chicago Tribune* columnist John Kass for presenting Mayor Rahm Emanuel with a painting of the mayor as “The Rahmfather,” and Mayor Rahm Emanuel for accepting it.

It wasn't even a good play on words, merely a perpetuation of a tired American genre that is more ethnic stereotype than artistic punditry. Yet, the *Tribune* is in good company with *Time Magazine*, whose cover utilized a mob boss motif for NJ governor Chris Christie.

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PREZ GUIDES SICILIAN STUDENTS



Institute president Bill Dal Cerro (kneeling left) poses with Sicilian students auditing classes at his suburban Chicago high school.

Last December, fourteen exchange students from a high school in Cefalu, Sicily, stayed with American host families in the Chicago suburbs of Bensenville and Wood Dale, IL. They came to attend and observe a week at a suburban American high school.

The teacher in charge of assisting the students and their teacher-chaperones was none other than the IIA's current president, Bill Dal Cerro, who teaches English, Communications and Film Study at Fenton High. Bill was chosen to act as a liaison between the Sicilian students and their chaperones during their visits to the school.

Quote Dal Cerro: “I talked to the (Sicilian) students at-length a few days before they left, and they truly enjoyed visiting our school and bonding with their Fenton counterparts.

Their only complaint, according to Bill, was ‘too many rules.’ In Italy, as in most of Europe, both the attitude and atmosphere via education is much different than ours. Kids are tracked according to their talents and interests, and their studies are built to complement their skills. And the school environment itself operates on the honor system: Students are given a lot of leeway when it comes to their own behavior and to their approach to their studies. The onus of responsibility is put on them to act properly and to take public education seriously.

ITALOS IN THE GUN DEBATE

by Louis Cornaro

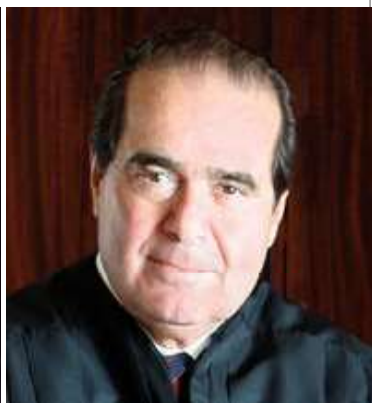
While we have no idea how our members stand on gun control in light of the Newtown, CT, massacre, our officers have nevertheless been intrigued by the Italic connection in both the tragic event and the on-going debate. Here is my take on it.

The gunman was Adam Lanza, whose mother was not Italic, actually owned the weapons and was her son's first victim. Why his mother needed an automatic weapon and why she raised her son, a clearly troubled boy, with easy access to weapons has yet to be addressed. The bottom line is that the weapons were legally owned but carelessly maintained.

The Newtown Massacre may be the first time an Italian surname has been injected into the growing list of mass shooting gunmen. And prominent Italian Americans are being drawn into the much-needed conversation on the Second Amendment: *A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.*

In the landmark 2008 Supreme Court decision, *District of Columbia v. Heller*, justices Antonin Scalia and Samuel Alito both sided with the pro-gun argument. Yet, in support of his reasoning, Scalia acknowledged that semi- and fully automatic weapons were not protected by the Second Amendment, as they are not needed by a state militia. However, as there is no law banning them, neither Scalia nor Alito, as judges, can create such a ban.

In New York State, Governor Andrew Cuomo has recently made tighter gun control his passion. Similarly, former West



Both Justices Alito (l) and Scalia (r) have referenced the "militia" as limiting personal armament.

Virginia governor and now U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (originally Mancino or Mancini) is leading his congressional colleagues in revisiting the Second Amendment. Manchin is a gun-owner and hunter but Newtown has reset his priorities. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi has also come out openly for tighter gun control.

On the other side stands former judge and Fox News analyst Andrew P. Napolitano. Napolitano fervently believes that the Second Amendment was written to allow citizens to overthrow tyrannical governments. No matter that the 1789 amendment clearly explains that gun ownership is based on the need for a regulated state militia, Napolitano is apparently against any restrictive interpretations of the Amendment.

Although this is an American dilemma, our officers believe that Italic sensibilities must kick in at some point. The learned men and women cited above need to help resolve this issue in a



Gun-owner Senator Manchin (D-WV) leads the call for change.



NYS Governor Cuomo just signed the toughest gun law in the U.S.

rational way. Can anyone just ignore the overwhelming connection of the Second Amendment to the "state militia" (now National Guard) rather than the sovereignty of an individual? Can we continue to ignore the effects of game and media violence in this country? And, of course, what more can be done to better identify and control the mentally ill?

Despite our stereotyped reputation for anarchy, the Italic people are first and foremost believers in rational behavior and pragmatic compromise. It is a tradition that dates back to our classical roots. May those leaders who share those roots maintain that sensibility.



Former judge and now FOX News analyst Andrew Napolitano says guns are protection against tyrannical government.

OLDEST PERSON DIES



For two weeks she held the record for oldest human at 115. Born April 4, 1897, in northern Italy, Dina (Guerra) Manfredini, moved to Iowa in 1920. She married here and had 4 children. Her oldest child is now 91. Manfredini worked into her 90s to support herself. She lived alone for 42 years after the death of her husband, survived colon cancer at 101, was dancing when she was 103, shoveled snow at 105 and lived on her own in her own home in West Des Moines, Iowa, until she was 110.

AMO, AMAS, ETC

In our last *Log* we noted that Latin has more Advanced Placement test takers in the U.S. than Italian (6,424 vs. 1,806). Seems that some educators are seeing Latin as brain food to stimulate thinking. It's also a good foundation for learning any of the Romance languages. (By the way, do you know that Romance refers to Roman not *amore*?)

A Catholic school in Denver has done something unholy: replacing Spanish with Latin as a component of the pagan classical ideal of *trivium* (literally the “meeting of three roads”) – logic, grammar, and rhetoric: logic to organize your thoughts, grammar to express them correctly, and rhetoric to persuade others.

Parents like the classical approach and even some home-schooled pupils are returning to the classroom. Enrollment shot up from 104 to 180, making the parish school solvent again.

Our *Aurora Heritage Program* incorporated Latin into its Italian lessons, something unheard among Italian language teachers. It seems others value our classical heritage more than we.

[Editor: we thank Beverly Coscarelli of Chicago for this information.]

Any Surprises Here? from p. 1

What point might that be, Governor? No. Not that Christie is the man to replace rock star Bruce Springsteen as the unofficial “Boss” of the Garden State. The clear intention here, along with the menacing photo, was to link Christie, whose mother is of Sicilian ancestry, to the popular image of New Jersey Italian-Americans as “wise guys.” But does Christie deserve this treatment?

Unfortunately, he has embraced the tough guy image that inevitably translates into gangster. For example, during last year’s presidential race Christie told attendees at the Iowa caucuses: “New Jersey is watching you too. We’re watching you really closely and, listen; I want to tell you something really clearly. I’m in a good mood this morning. I’m feeling happy and upbeat. I love being with Mitt and Ann. But let me tell you, you people disappoint me on Tuesday, you don’t do what you’re supposed to do on Tuesday for Mitt Romney, I will be back Jersey style; people, I will be back.”

“I will be back, Jersey style.” What does that mean? Christie was clearly playing to the stereotype that as an Italian-American from the “Soprano” state, he would seek revenge on those corn huskers if they didn’t vote for Romney.

Of course the Governor was only kidding, right? But why go along with the stereotype when you know it’s going to invite media attention and even ridicule? Clearly the photo and its implications bothered Christie, especially when he thought about how it would affect his children.

A few years ago when Christie was first elected governor he made a comment about how he disliked the negative stereotypes that Italian-Americans had to endure. So what changed, governor? Who on your staff suggested that you play along with the stereotypical tough Jersey guy? How politically advantageous has it been for you? If negative stereotypes of Italian-Americans bother you so much, why not project an image of dignity, rather than tough guy?

Recently, Governor Joe Manchin of West Virginia [who is also part Italian] expressed his displeasure with a proposed MTV reality show entitled *Buckwild* that perpetuates stereotypes of native West Virginians. Manchin was quoted in the *Washington Post* as saying: “This show plays to ugly, inaccurate stereotypes about the people of West Virginia.” *Buckwild* was referred to as “The Jersey Shore of Appalachia.” The program has since been cancelled.

The lesson to be learned from Governor Christie’s blunder is that if you’re an Italian-American politician, reject the negative images, whatever they might be. A political consultant might think it’s a good idea, but will your children?
