

## IT'S ONLY A MOVIE . . .

COMPILED BY DONA DE SANCTIS

**This new CSJ feature chronicles how the entertainment world's stereotyping of Italian Americans pervades all aspects of our society and affects real-life people of Italian descent. Contributors' names are in parenthesis.**

- Supreme Court nominee Judge Samuel Alito is "**some meatball-sucking wop**," according to *Imus in the Morning*, the nationally syndicated radio and TV talk show. The remark was made Nov. 2 by the show's producer Bernard McGuirk, who added, "First Scalia, now Alito. What is [President Bush] doing? Interpreting the Constitution or mixing concrete?" He ended, wishing Alito luck "**And to hell with those who don't like the fact that he's a God-fearing guido.**"
- **One dollar in damages** is the court-ordered fine that a Connecticut man must pay for libeling the Waterbury Lega Siciliana Social Club when he alleged that its members were affiliated with the Mafia. (*Frank Trivisano*)
- "**Leave it to a dago to bring a knife to a gun-fight**" was the punch line of a joke told on the *Bob and Tom* radio program Sept. 24, 2005. The show is nationally syndicated. (*Robert Benintendi*)
- **Franco DiFortunato** is the name of the "**evil Fairy Godfather**" in the lavish stage production, *Twice Charmed*, a re-working of the Cinderella story, offered to passengers on the Disney Magic Cruise Ship. (*Karen Fanale & Richard Annotico*)
- "**How to be a goomba**," is the theme of *Nicky Deuce*, a new novel for teen-agers by Steve Schirripa. The title character is an Italian American boy who leaves his middle class suburban family to spend the summer with his working class relatives in Brooklyn where he gets mixed up with local Italian American wiseguys. Schirripa, who plays Bobby Bacala on *The Sopranos*, says it's the first in a series about Nicky. A movie based on the book is in the works. He also has written *A Goomba's Guide to Life* and *The Goomba's Book of Love*.
- A six-week **television and print ad campaign** featured celebrity chef Jamie Oliver strung upside down on a meat hook alongside animal carcasses. The campaign was promoting his show about Italian cuisine. (*Robert Necci*)
- As part of its series *Secrets of the Dead*, the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), aired nationally *The Gangland Graveyard* (Nov. 16). It featured gruesome footage of the remains of various crime bosses with "experts" commenting on their lives. The corresponding website features pictures and text along with a "**Teacher's Tool Box**" offering "*lesson plans, tips and resources to use in the classroom.*" This was the only criminal-based documentary in the series. Featured in other segments were the Ancient Egyptians, the Vikings and a tribe of American Indians.
- For the second consecutive year the New Milford **public school system** in Bergen County, N.J. has **replaced Columbus Day** with three days off for Jewish holidays. The state has 1.5 million Italian Americans who make up 18 % of the total population. (*Rocco Zaccardi*)
- **No Italians or Italian Americans** were listed in *Character Is Destiny*, by Sen. John McCain and co-author Mark Salter. They profiled 36 figures from Joan of Arc to Nelson Mandela who "put honor and the demands of conscience above all else."

Overlooked were: **Captain Rocky Versace**, an Army officer whose heroics as a POW in Vietnam earned him a posthumous Medal of Honor; **Father Geno Baroni**, who marched with Martin Luther King and helped inner city communities and **Judge John Sirica**, who stood up to the Nixon White House in the Watergate scandal. (*CSJ*)

**Send your contributions to: "It's Only a Movie", Italian America Magazine, 219 E Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. E-mail: ddesanctis@osia.org. Include name and daytime telephone number. No telephone calls please. Submissions cannot be acknowledged.**