

**VIRGINIA**

Bangladesh may not seem a likely place to celebrate Thanksgiving, but many people were thankful for **Susan and Joe Yungbluth** of the **Peninsula Italian America Lodge #2145**, who spent two weeks there last November on a volunteer medical mission.

John is a certified registered nurse anesthetist and retired Army major. Susan is a registered nurse. Together they assisted in 29 operations for cancer, hernias, cysts, etc. at three facilities in Dhaka and out in the countryside.

They also have been doing foster care for infants since 1997 for Catholic Charities of eastern Virginia and just placed their 23rd child, Susan says.

In January 2008, they are headed back to Bangladesh. Want to help? Send checks payable to *“Project Bangladesh” to Susan Yungbluth, 86 Silverwood Drive, Newport News, VA 23608.*

In 2005, Susan received the Grand Lodge of VA’s Walter Junger Humanitarian Award. “She just keeps giving,” says GL President Paul Siebeking. “God bless both of them!” We second the emotion!



Susan and Joe Yungbluth with some of their friends in Bangladesh.

**NEW JERSEY**

Children with special needs are given special attention by the **Alighieri-Garibaldi Lodge #494** in Collingswood, says lodge president Larry DiGiovanni.

For the past 30 years, the lodge has sponsored a Christmas party at

the New Sharon School in Deptford for children ages 5 through 21 with mild to moderate cognitive delays or who are multiply disabled.

The lodge buys gifts for all the students and serves them lunch.



Some of the Alighieri-Garibaldi Lodge's special children.

**FLORIDA**

If only every lodge had a **Terry Quattrocchi Simpson!** The former president of **Bradenton Lodge #2782** recently bought a building for her lodge.

“We were like orphans, going from restaurant to restaurant for our meetings,” Terry says. “We needed something we could call our own.” She charges \$200 a month in rent that she donates to the lodge, which has 30 members and is still growing.



Terry Quattrocchi Simpson and her lodge building.

GRAND LODGE OF NEW YORK

In 2002, the **Grand Lodge of New York** decided to celebrate Italian American writers by instituting a Grand Lodge of NY Literary Award in memory of novelists Pietro Di Donato and John Fante.

To date, five talented writers have been honored, the latest being the noted scholar and author **Robert Viscusi**, who received the 2006 award during the grand lodge’s convention last June in Albany, reports Award Committee Chair **Leo Cimini**.

An award-winning poet, novelist and literary critic, Viscusi directs the Wolfe Institute for the Humanities at Brooklyn College and is president of the Italian American Writers Association.



**Robert Viscusi ( R ) accepts his literary award from GL of NY President Carlo Matteucci.**

**GOT A GOOD STORY?**

Send details with your lodge’s name and number (photo optional) to: *ITALIAN AMERICA* Magazine, 219 E Street NE, Washington, DC 20002 or E-mail [ddeanctis@osia.org](mailto:ddeanctis@osia.org). **Include a daytime telephone no.** Entries not acknowledged and photos not returned unless requested.

NEW YORK

Five seriously wounded veterans of the war in Afghanistan and Iraq were treated to a night on the town by the **Columbus Lodge #2143** in Massapequa last September.

After a surf and turf dinner and VIP seats at an Aerosmith and Motley Crew concert, the men were welcomed backstage by the stagehands, who gave them a rousing ovation, and got to meet the performers.

The evening was made possible through lodge fund-raisers and a golf outing co-sponsored by **Mike Ragno** and **Ben Versaci**, who own L.J.C. Dismantling in Elmont.



**Veterans (l. to r.): Ryan Donnelly, James O’Leary, Lameen Witter, Jamel Daniels and Ian Lennon. Standing: Lodge coordinators Paul Hastings and Tony Ragno.**

Lodges interested in participating in the Wounded Warriors Project, contact Tony Ragno (516/586 4117) or Paul Hastings (516/521-2678).

OSIA NATION NEWSLETTER HAS A NEW LOOK

In January, OSIA Nation, the quarterly newsletter for the presidents of OSIA lodges and state chapters, received a major face lift.

Now in full color and professionally designed, it has many new features including tips to help recruit and maintain members; ideas to spice up meetings, a speakers bureau column, suggestions for fund-raising and much more.

Produced by the staff at OSIA’s national office in Washington, D.C., OSIA Nation aims to help OSIA leaders strengthen their lodges. To see it, go to [www.osia.org](http://www.osia.org) at “Members Only” and click



**The new and improved OSIA Nation newsletter**

on “Library.” Send your stories and photos to [kcafiero@osia.org](mailto:kcafiero@osia.org). - **DDS**