



# LA SOTTO VOCE

The Official Newsletter of the *Columbia Association*

Fire Department, City of New York

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## 2012 AWARDS DINNER ONCE AGAIN A SUCCESS!

On June 21, 2012 once again we filled Russo's on the Bay to honor our scholarship winners. The Columbia Association awarded over \$16,000 to our children. We were blessed to have Regina Wilson, Engine 219, perform the National Anthem and FF Stephen Inguagiato, Engine 329, perform the Italian National Anthem. Stephen also serenaded us during our dinner with "Meraviglioso!"

Our 2012 Man of the Year Mario Cilento spoke of his family and friends and the accomplishments of safeguarding the blue-collar workers benefits. He is a true friend of the FDNY.

Presidents Award winner Edward Killduff wondered how a proud Irish-American is honored by the Columbia Association? Irish American / Italian American... we only honored the American part. All kidding aside Edward Killduff's contributions to the FDNY is second to none. His leadership and friendship made him an excellent honoree.

Our Special Recognition Award recipient Stephen Sillers from the Sillers Foundation expressed his great sense of gratitude and accomplishments to our

*(Continued on next page)*



Vist Our Online Store & Shop For Official FDNY Columbia Association Merchandise.  
All Proceeds Benefit The Columbia Association Scholarship Fund.  
[www.fdnycolumbia.com](http://www.fdnycolumbia.com)





(Continued from cover)

organization. He spoke of all the programs of the Siller Foundation and with everyone's support, we will never forget 9-11.

It was just like attending a wedding without a bride and groom. We danced through the night as the Chris Michaels Band kept us partying. Our bellies were stuffed thanks to Frank Russo and his exceptional staff.

A special thanks to all our scholarship contributors, journal purchasers, and to all the participants of the Columbia Association events. All of our events fund our scholarship program. We thank all who attended and we hope to see you next year for our 79th Scholarship Dinner Dance. Mark your calendar June 20, 2013.





# 2012 Columbus Day Parade

Join us on Monday October 8th as we march up 5th Avenue in the 2012 Columbus Day Parade. Our formation will assemble on W44th Street and 5th Ave at 11:00 AM. Come early and enjoy our Pre-Parade Breakfast Reception, from 9:00 - 10:30 AM, at Annie Moore's Pub and Restaurant, 50 E43rd St between Vanderbilt Ave and Madison Ave. At the conclusion of the parade we will gather for food and refreshments. More information and tickets will be available at the parade. Friends and family are always welcome. For additional information or any questions contact Philip LaRocco, Parade Chairman, at (347) 884-1169.

## HEARING LOSS CLAIMS

TO ALL FIREFIGHTERS AND EMTs

It is strongly suspected that one of the major causes of this Occupational Noise-Induced Hearing Loss is the extremely high decibel level attributable to the Siren of the Rig.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH) has conducted numerous studies with respect to this very issue. Their findings are startling and include the fact that on the average Firefighters and EMTs suffer continual hearing loss on a yearly basis.

If you believe you have suffered hearing loss due to exposure to high decibel level sirens please call us today to discuss your rights.

HEARING  
LOSS  
LAWSUIT



ALL  
CONSULTATIONS  
ARE FREE AND  
CONFIDENTIAL

CALL TODAY

**1-800-LAW-HELP**  
(1-800-529-4357)

A recent lawsuit has come up concerning hearing loss due to the exposure to the sirens on the rigs. Please pass this info on to others... We were all exposed to high decibel levels of noise throughout our careers.

Contact this firm; they are the first to approach this issue that concerns us all. Stay safe.

John Signorile  
Good and Welfare,

## 9<sup>TH</sup> BI-ANNUAL CIGAR NIGHT CLUB MACANUDO

26 E. 63<sup>rd</sup> Street  
(Just East of Madison Avenue)

October - Date To Be Announced  
Limited Space. First 100 PAID - Do not get locked out!

Contact Keith Tanico ASAP 917-337-7413  
Please make checks payable to:  
Columbia Association Scholarship Fund  
C/O Keith Tanico, 14 Ivanhoe Drive, Merrick, NY 11566



Keith Tanico, President  
Columbia Association  
New York City Fire Dept.

Greetings:

The Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation and the Siller family wish to convey its deepest gratitude to the Columbia Association for honoring our foundation on your 78th Anniversary, with a 2012 Special Recognition Award.



The award and the poignant rendering of a firefighter in full gear, your gift to us, stands as a reminder that firefighters have been called the "bravest" because of their readiness to serve.

The alliance between the Fire Department, the Columbia Association, and our foundation is an ongoing commitment to serve and protect the community.

From the very first Tunnel to Towers Run, hundreds of firefighters have been standing sentinel, inside and outside the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, greeting the thousands of runners from across the globe who have come to honor those who perished on 9/11. It is no surprise to us that each year, Fire Commissioner Salvatore Cassano pushes a wheelchair bound, wounded warrior through the tunnel to the finish line, a journey of 5 kilometers. And it is no surprise to us that the Chief of the Department, Edward Kilduff, situated on the other end of the tunnel, takes it upon himself to cook thousands of hamburgers for the hungry runners and walkers who have crossed the finish line.

But there is more: now that our foundation is focusing on "Homes for America's Bravest," the FDNY has become our biggest supporter, hosting their own barbecues, dinners, runs, and golf outings for the construction of "Smart Homes" for those members of the military who, in defense of their country, have returned home missing three and sometimes all four of their limbs. Close to \$400,000 has been raised for these young men and women by New York's bravest!

Like many firefighters, our family has had uncles, cousins, and a nephew who have been members of this great and brave community of firefighters. However, it has been since 9/11, after the death of our brother, Stephen, that our family has come to realize what it means to be one of New York's bravest. You have let us into your family, and in so doing you have inspired us to never quit and to reach out to those who need it the most.

God bless you,  
Russell Siller  
Secretary  
Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation

COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION  
**GOLF  
OUTING**  
FIRE DEPT. CITY OF NEW YORK

8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
SCHOLARSHIP  
GOLF OUTING

**\$175**

WHEN

September 24 - 25, 2012  
(Monday to Tuesday)

WHERE

Hudson Valley Resort & Spa  
(formerly the Granit)

CHECK IN

Can't get room until  
after golf Monday

TIME

MONDAY 1<sup>st</sup> round tee times  
TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> round 9am shotgun

INCLUDES

Golf, cart, room, cocktail hour,  
dinner, and breakfast.  
(Any extra golf you will have  
to pay for cart only.)

*Please have checks in  
asap* Foursomes Going Fast  
Make checks payable to:  
COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION

MAIL TO

JOSEPH SMITHWICK  
20 PIPER LANE  
LEVITTOWN, NY. 11756  
(516) 796-0975

PLEASE SEND MEMBERS IN  
FOURSOME AND ROOMING  
ASSIGNMENTS





# Bocce Ball in the Park!

On June 28 we held our first annual Bocce Ball Tournament at Eisenhower Park. It was a great day to be out in the sun. Games started at 11am and ran till 4 pm. Everyone stayed till sunset around 8pm. Turnout was great as there were 16 2-man teams and about 100 onlookers. The Columbia's Banner was hung on the band stand. All had a great day out in the sun, playing horseshoes while they waited for their chance to play bocce in this single elimination tournament. There were 2 courts. Food was provided by Mille Grazie Pizza, Cardinals Bakery, Vincent's Clam Bar, and a special thanks to Hooters for the wings and sending the Hooter girls to do our raffle and serve the food. We ate from 10 am till 8 pm. Wine, beer, and soda were served all day and, of course, coffee and sambuca with pastries to end the day. Almost everyone won a bottle of wine, tickets to movies, or a dinner at Andrea's 25 or one of the nearby restaurants.

The winners were: 3rd Place, Del's  
2nd Place, Bags  
and 1st Place, The Carpet Guys

Trophies were given to each of the winners. In all it was a great time together. Looking forward to having another great turnout again next year.

Thanks to Nick DePirao for his help and a special thanks to Jimmy Checco for coming out to fix the courts the day before. Great job by all!



COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION & COLLETTE VACATIONS

# Southern Italy & Sicily

October 25 - November 5, 2012

**BOOK BY NOW AND YOU MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE \$100 PER PERSON**

*Highlights...*

PALERMO • MONREALE • AGRIGENTO • VALLEY OF THE TEMPLES • CATANIA • MT. ETNA VOLCANO • GIARDINI NAXOS • TAORMINA • TARANTO • ALBEROBELLO • MATERA • SORRENTO • AMALFI COAST • POMPEII

12 Days, 17 Meals (10 breakfasts and 7 dinners)

Per Person Rates\*: **Double \$3599**  
**Single \$4099**  
**Triple \$3569**

\*Included in price: round trip air from J.F Kennedy International, air taxes and fees/surcharges of \$150 (subject to increase until paid in full), hotel transfers  
 \*Not included in price: cancellation waiver and insurance of \$220 per person

Check our webpage for more details at [WWW.FDNYCOLUMBIA.COM](http://WWW.FDNYCOLUMBIA.COM)

COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION IS

## GOING GREEN

ACTIVE MEMBERS CAN NOW PAY YOUR DUES WITH DIRECT DEPOSIT

Sign in on Employee Self Service (ESS). Follow to Fraternal Organization Dues and click on Columbia Association Enroll and your dues will automatically be sent to us. For our retired members we are still working on the program. Once you sign up you will never have worry about your dues. Each year, your dues will be automatically deducted from the first check of the NewYear.

We are also working on e-mailing the newspaper directly to your address. We will also be able to keep you up to date with all of our meetings, trips and gatherings with a blast e-mail. We will be able to keep everyone up to date without killing trees! Please stay tuned for more information.

On behalf of the NYC Fire Department Columbia Association, I would like to thank all those who supported the 2012 Annual Scholarship Raffle. Your generosity allowed us to award scholarships to many children of NYC Firefighters. Congratulations to those recipients of the scholarships and best of luck with your academic future.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP RAFFLE WINNERS:

**1<sup>ST</sup> PRIZE \$ 10,000 - DC James Campbell**

**2<sup>ND</sup> PRIZE \$2,000 - E-24 / L-5**

**3<sup>RD</sup> PRIZE \$1,000 - Fred Cortese**

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!!!  
 Salvatore Mirra Jr. - Lottery Chairman

## T-SHIRTS and SWEATSHIRTS

*Now Available* at monthly membership meetings or by contacting **JOE DEPAOLA, L-27 at 845.558.4410** or email [live4tonight@optonline.net](mailto:live4tonight@optonline.net)





# HISTORY OF THE LEATHER HELMET

Jacobus Turck of New York City is credited with inventing the first fire cap around 1740. It was round with a high crown and narrow rim and was made of leather. Improvements on his design were made by Mathew DuBois, who sewed iron wire in to the edge of the brim to give the helmet shape and strength, and provide resistance to heat, moisture, and warping. The leather helmet as it is known today came from a very modest and non-fire related beginning. Although the year the traditional fire helmet was invented is mired in speculation and debate, it is generally agreed upon as sometime between 1821 and 1836. The gentleman credited with its founding was named Henry T. Gratacap. Gratacap was a volunteer fireman in New York City, but made his living as a luggage maker. He had made quite a name for himself because of his innovative luggage specifically designed for ocean transit. It was made of leather that was specially treated, which offered unparalleled durability and withstood wetness without rotting. These qualities were very desirable in a fire helmet as well and Gratacap designed the first "eight comb" (a design composed of eight segments) fire helmet. It was named the "New Yorker" and originally adopted by the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) in the late 1800s.

The New Yorker helmet has remained virtually unchanged through approximately 168 years of faithful and steadfast service. The New Yorker helmet retains the same look and quality that generations after generations of firefighters have relied upon. They are made of stout tanned Western cowhide, a quarter of an inch thick, reinforced with leather strips which rise like Gothic arches inside the crown. The long duckbill, or beavertail, which sticks out at the rear, is to keep water from running down firemen's necks. Originally, these helmets were sometimes worn backwards so the beavertail would protect its wearer from the intense heat of firefighting. Additionally, some tillermen (a name for the driver of the rear section of a tractor drawn aerial truck) would also wear them backwards to protect their faces from rain and snow.

During this time, two brothers named Cairns were operating a metal badge button and insignia business in New York City. The Cairns Brothers are credited with the idea of mounting an identification badge to the front of Gratacap's helmets; today these are known as front pieces. The two companies operated cooperatively until Gratacap's retirement sometime in the 1850s, when the Cairns & Brother legacy was born; Cairns & Brother has pioneered firefighter helmet technology ever since. Cairns &

Brother's commitment to protecting lives is evident in their "systems," where engineered components synergistically work together for unparalleled protection in harsh environments. The original OSHA compliant leather helmet, it is individually hand shaped, hand trimmed, and hand stitched to meet the strenuous demands of today's most dangerous profession - firefighting.

The Leatherhead is a term used for a firefighter who uses the leather helmet for protection from the hazards we face everyday on the streets. The Leather Helmet is an international sign of a Firefighter, a symbol that is significant in not only tradition from the early years of firefighting, but one of bravery, integrity, honor and pride. This helmet is a sign of who we are, not what we are. The leather helmet of choice for Ocean City FOOLS is the Cairns & Brother New Yorker N5A.

Although not a required component of the helmet, those of us who truly live the tradition wear a brass eagle adornment that graces the top of the helmet and secures its front piece. In our simple, childish way, we always believed that the eagle adorning our helmet meant something special, maybe the spirit of American enterprise, or onward to victory. We were wrong. The eagle, it seems, just happened, and has no particular significance at all. Long, long ago, around 1825 to be exact, an unknown sculptor did a commemorative figure for the grave of a volunteer fireman. You can see it in Trinity Churchyard today; it shows the hero issuing from the flames, his trumpet in one hand, a sleeping babe in the other, and on his helmet, an eagle. Firefighters were not wearing eagles at the time; it was a flight of pure fancy on the sculptor's part. But as soon as the firemen saw it, they thought it was a splendid idea and it was widely adopted. It has remained on firemen's helmets ever since, in spite of the fact that it has proved, frequently and conclusively, to be a dangerous and expensive ornament indeed. It sticks up in the air. It catches its beak in window sashes, on telephone wires. It is always getting dented, bent and knocked off. Every so often, some realist points out how much safer and cheaper it would be to do away with the eagle, but we who live the tradition always refuse.





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Fire Department, City of New York  
14 Ivanhoe Drive  
Merrick, NY 11566

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## LA SOTTO VOCE

The Newsletter of the FDNY

Columbia Association

La Sotto Voce is published  
four times annually.

### What does the word DUES mean above your name on your address label mean?

We are updating our Membership program. One of our new features includes a Membership history located directly above your name on your address label. Please check the label. The numbers above your name indicate that we have not received your dues for that particular year. With any new system there are glitches. If your records vary with ours, please give us a call at (516) 303-4209. Our Financial Secretary Steve Forlenza will return your call.

*Below indicates 2006 and 2008 dues have not been received.*

**DUES: 06 08**

**Columbia Association  
14 Ivanhoe Dr  
Merrick, NY 11566**

SAMPLE

If you only see the word DUES above your name, this means you are up-to-date and no action is needed. We apologize for any confusion.

## Columbia Association: Executive Board & Committee Members

### Executive Board:

President	Keith Tanico	Division 13	917 337-7413
1st Vice President	Craig Silvino	Ladder 127	516 286-1796
2nd Vice President	Joseph Smithwick	Engine 303	516 662-3699
3rd Vice President	John Signorile	Ret-L126	516 782-5343
Treasurer	Teddy Forlenza	Ladder 8	718 213-7499
Financial Secretary	Stephen Forlenza	Division 8	347 266-8781
Recording Secretary	Sal Belmonte	Ladder 102	516 233-8142
Sergeant-At-Arms	Enrico Boletti	Squad 1	917 207-4773
Manhattan Trustee	Nicholas DePiero	Ladder 24	917 648-9305
Queens Trustee	Sal Mirra	Ladder 138	516 322-7588
Staten Island Trustee	Ignazio Venezia	Engine 282	917 682-7991
Brooklyn Trustee	Phil LaRocco	Ladder 148	347 884-1169
Bronx Trustee	Joseph DePaola	Ladder 27	845 558-4410
EMS Trustee	Grace Cacciola	Division 5	516 852-3318
Legal Advisor	Stuart Salles, Esq.		
Spiritual Advisor	Msgr. Marc Filacchione	Archdiocese of NY	

### Committee Chairs:

Trips	Keith Tanico/Joe Smithwick
Membership	Joseph Smithwick
Dues	Steve Forlenza
Lottery	Sal Mirra
Parade	Phil LaRocco
Good & Welfare	John Signorile
Scholarship/Dinner Dance	Craig Silvino
Hershey Park Trip	Sal Belmonte
Dinner Journal	Grace Cacciola
Editor	Craig Silvino

❖ Visit our website: [www.fdnycolumbia.com](http://www.fdnycolumbia.com)

❖ E-mail the Columbia Association: [keith@fdnycolumbia.com](mailto:keith@fdnycolumbia.com)

❖ Columbia Association Hotline: (516) 303-4209

## 2012 Columbia Association Borough Meetings

Brooklyn  
April 10 & November 13  
VFW Post, 2414 Geritsen Ave.

Queens  
January 10 & June 12  
VFW Post 19-12 149th St.  
(between 19th & 20th Ave.)  
Whitestone NY 11357  
(718) 746-0540

Staten Island  
February 15 & September 12  
Hillside Swim Club  
151 Signs Rd.

Bronx  
March 13 & October 9  
Maestro's Caterers  
1703 Bronxdale Ave.

Long Island  
May 8  
American Legion  
250 Franklin Ave.  
Malverne, LI

2012 Christmas Party  
To Be Announced

