# **President's Message**

MAY 2020



Dear Brothers and Sisters

First and foremost, I hope this monthly newsletter finds you in good health, both physically and emotionally. To say we are living in interesting times is putting it mildly. None of us is immune to the immense social change the COVID-19 crisis has created. This is truly this generations

defining moment, as to how we have combatted and will continue to combat this virus.

As an organization, we have taken the necessary steps to ensure we do our part to contain the spread of this virus and help those that are affected by it. In this newsletter you will find letters from the Strategic Board, Villa Italia, and the Grand Lodge sharing information on how each group has handled the COVID-19 crisis. Moreover, there are recommendations from the Strategic Board and Grand lodge as to how the Trieste lodge should operate for the foreseeable future. I encourage everyone to read these recommendations and provide me feedback on them.

Speaking to how the Trieste Lodge has helped those affected by the economic challenges occurring in our community, we have made donations from our charity account. These include:

- 1) Hamilton Food Share, \$1000 cash donation
- 2) Mission Services, \$1000 cash donation for food pantry

- 3) Eva Rothwell Centre, \$500 in food purchased and directly placed in a food pantry
- 4) Villa Italia, \$1000 to provide 70 meals to front-line staff

As the crisis continues to unfold and we see reason and opportunity to support a local charity or organization, we will do our best to support those in need.

It is unfortunate that we will not be able to meet or hold events until at least September, as many of our members look forward to our monthly meetings as one of their only social gatherings. Please keep this in mind especially for some of our more senior members, and if possible, make a quick phone call to a member you know may be alone during this time, just to keep in touch. This will go a long way.

Wishing everyone best of health, we will hopefully see each other sooner than later. Please note in June's newsletter we will discuss the plans for the current executive and some options for extending the term into next year and/or holding elections at the next possible meeting.

Lewis Merolli President

# MESSAGGIO DEL PRESIDENTE





Cari fratelli e sorelle

Innanzitutto spero che questa newsletter mensile vi trovi in ottima salute, sia fisicamente che emotivamente. Dire che stiamo vivendo un momento di grande importanza e' dir poco. Nessuno di noi è immune all'immenso cambiamento sociale che la crisi COVID-19 ha creato. Questo

è davvero un momento decisivo per le generazioni di oggi, su come combattere e continueremo a combattere questo virus.

Come organizzazione, abbiamo preso le misure necessarie per assicurarci di fare la nostra parte per contenere la diffusione di questo virus e aiutare coloro che ne sono affetti. In questa newsletter troverete le indicazioni del Consiglio Strategico, di Villa Italia e della Grand Lodge che condividono informazioni su come ciascun gruppo ha gestito la crisi COVID-19. Inoltre, ci sono raccomandazioni del Consiglio strategico e della Gran Loggia su come dovrebbe operare la Loggia di Trieste per il prossimo futuro. Incoraggio tutti a leggere questi consigli e fornirmi qualsiasi tipo di indicazioni a loro riguardo.

In merito alla crisi che viviamo, la Loggia Trieste ha aiutato le persone colpite dalle difficolta' economiche che si verificano nella nostra comunità, abbiamo fatto donazioni dal nostro conto di beneficenza. Questi includono:

- 1) Hamilton Food Share, donazione in contanti di \$ 1000
- 2) Mission Services, donazione in contanti di \$ 1000 per la dispensa alimentare
- 3) Eva Rothwell Center, \$ 500 in alimenti acquistati e collocati direttamente in una dispensa
- 4) Villa Italia, \$ 1000 per fornire 70 pasti al personale in prima linea

Mentre la crisi continua a manifestarsi, ci sono ulteriori motivi ed opportunità nel sostenere un'organizzazione di beneficenza o un'organizzazione locale, faremo del nostro meglio per sostenere i bisognosi.

È un peccato che non saremo in grado di incontrarci o organizzare eventi almeno fino a settembre, poiché molti dei nostri membri attendono con impazienza i nostri incontri mensili come uno dei loro unici incontri sociali. E' importante tenerlo a mente soprattutto per alcuni dei nostri membri più anziani e, se possibile, fate una telefonata a un membro che sapete possa essere solo durante questo periodo, solo per rimanere in contatto. Sarebbe un gesto di grande importanza!

Augurando a tutti la migliore salute, speriamo di vederci prima o poi. Da notare che nella newsletter di Giugno discuteremo i piani per l'attuale dirigenza e alcune opzioni per estendere il mandato al prossimo anno e / o tenere elezioni nella prossima riunione possibile.

Lewis Merolli Presidente



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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

During this unprecedented time, I hope that this email finds you all well and safe.

I received many emails and phones calls from lodges across Canada looking for answers and guidance on a number of issues. Furthermore, many have shared the struggle they are facing in maintaining the facilities they own as a result of having to close, due to COVID 19.

It is also heart wrenching to watch the struggles our brothers and sisters are facing in Italy, especially the northern parts that were hit hard by the virus.

As we navigate through this difficult time, National Council is recommending the following:

- 1. Elections be delayed until fall or until group gatherings are allowed. This applies to lodges that have elections scheduled in the coming months. As a result, the existing executive should remain in place until such time that a proper election can be held.
- 2. On March 28, 2020, Grand Lodge held its first online meeting via video conferencing. A successful meeting across 3 time zones.
- 3. It was decided at that meeting that our Bi-Annual meeting will be held online using the video conferencing app Webex. The date is Saturday May 30th, 2020. Details and instructions will be sent to all lodges indicating how to log on. Please mark the date and notify the delegates of

your lodge that attended the last National Convention. If a past delegate is unable to participate, the President of the lodge can appoint a member in good standing as a substitute. An agenda will be sent out two weeks prior. If you have an item that you would like us to consider for the agenda, please email me directly.

4. All fees to Grand Lodge due from local lodges will be waived for 2020.

Again, the world is grappling with this health issue of enormous scale and human impact, and our hearts go out to all who have been affected by the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19). I know as brothers & sisters of this Order, we will weather this storm and are here for each other if needed.

Keep Safe!

Fraternally yours,

Carmine E. Filice National President

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# LA FESTA DELLA LIBERAZIONE - LIBERATION DAY

"Una mattina...mi son svegliato...o bella Ciao, bella Ciao, bella Ciao Ciao..."...chances are you are still singing in your head as more words come to life in your mind and you are naturally taken adrift by a song that has spread its wings worldwide as a hymn of freedom and resistance. This song ties in with a special date that just passed by, the Liberation day on April 25th. This year marks its 75th anniversary from the the end of the Nazi occupation in Italy on April 25th 1945. It is to this date considered to be a public holiday. This was a victory led by the Italian Resistance, from the over 250,000 fearless and brave partigiani, 50,000 of which had perished in the name of the Italian Freedom after Italy signed an armistice with the Allied forces on September 3rd, 1943. The reason this date was chosen by convention was due to the symbolic liberation of one of the major Italian cities at that time: Milano. A young Sandro Pertini, ( who would have become one of the most beloved Italian Presidents in the 70s and 80s) then leader of the National Liberation Committee, decided to give a radio announcement to his fellow Italians listening:

"Cittadini, lavoratori! Sciopero generale contro l'occupazione tedesca, contro la guerra fascista, per la salvezza delle nostre terre, delle nostre case, delle nostre officine. Come a Genova e Torino, ponete i tedeschi di fronte al dilemma: arrendersi o perire!"

"Citizens, workers! This is a general strike against the German occupation, against the fascist war, for the freedom of our land, of our homes, of our shops.

As in Genoa and Turin, pose such dilemma to the German troops: give up or perish!"

With this being said, the complete surrender of the German army in the entire Italian soil won't officially occur until May 2nd 1945.

Though such events that occurred 75 years ago seem so far away, let us always remember and learn from our past so as never to repeat itself again.

### Brother Steven Zecchin







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# STRATEGIC BOARD UPDATE



The Strategic Board has had a discussion via email and has addressed two items that recorded by email response from all Board members to which there is unanimous positive response. Both items deal with the extension of the current terms of office for both the Strategic Boards and the other three Executives.

# 1) The year end for the Strategic Board was set as June 30th 2020

Given the circumstances of the COVID-19 requiring the distancing that will prevent our meeting on a face-to-face basis, this current term be extended to December 31, 2020. It is hoped that we will be able to meet sometime in the fall.

# 2) The term of office for the current Trieste Lodge Executive

The Trieste Lodge Executive's term of office ends in June. Since all meetings have been suspended at least until September, that hope to make a decision at that time as to when an election will be held.

Once again, these are extraordinary times. The recommendation from the Strategic Board is that the current Trieste Lodge Executive's term of office be extended to June of 2021. It would be prudent for this Executive to remain in place so as to deal with whatever situations may arise so that they can continue to deal with these issues.

The same would apply terms of office for both the Housing and the Charity (Villa) Boards have a much later election period; however, if it is necessary, those terms of office should be extended.

The Strategic Board believes that these are prudent and responsible actions that should be taken.

The Board looks forward to comprehensive review of the DMS report that is being presents by President Carmine Filice. As well as the updates from the Villa, by President Brennan Caiella. Certainly, once the COVID-19 pandemic is settled and a vaccine is developed, we will need to review what was done during this pandemic that was good and those areas that could be improved. The federal and provincial authorities have announced such reviews that will be undertaken on a macro level. We should be planning to do the same on our own programs.

The members of the Board wish to acknowledge the commitment and ethical work that has been undertaken by both the administrative and operational staff of Villa Italia. It is through there hard work that the Villa has retained its high operational standard. The safety and care of the residents is their driving concern.

A similar thanks goes to the management of the Housing Corporation properties. Both management and staff have done excellent work in maintaining the safety and security of both the tenants and properties.

Due to the hard work and commitments by these frontline workers, we will get through this crisis.

To everyone, please stay safe and healthy...

Frank Attardo, Chair, Strategic Board







# 祸 VILLA ITALIA COVID 19 UPDATE



As the new world settles in, I would like to update the membership on our efforts during the COVID 19 situations.

The highest priority since the onset of this situation remains the health and well being of our residents and staff. This required some extreme measures and expenses to facilitate. We take infection control seriously and have trained and remained compliant since we opened our doors in 2003.

We continue to receive directives and updated information from many levels and government bodies. Specifically each day we have updates from Ontario Health, Hamilton Public Health, Ontario Chief Medical Officer, ORCA (Ontario Retirements Communities Association) and the RHRA (Retirement Home Regulatory Authority. These updates come several times a day.

Villa Italia implemented complete visitor restrictions as of Friday March 13. This meant family visits were restricted unless a family member was palliative or gravely ill and deemed an essential visitor by the leadership team. As well, active screening was implemented immediately for staff and essential care providers. This includes screening and temperature of all staff and external care providers at the start and end of shift.

The management team works collaboratively with the LHINS and their contracted agencies to reduce the number of external care providers to the building. These workers are the cause of the community transmission we all hear about in LTC and Retirement Homes. We were successful in adapting a temporary cluster care model with them that reduces the number into the Villa. Those residents who still receive external care visits have had some services temporarily placed on hold to reduce the risk of outside exposure. Our staff

have assumed some of these care tasks in the interim.

We have experienced a small number of staff who have either self quarantined or who may have had exposure. Those staff have been on mandatory 14 day leave from work and are encouraged to follow the Chief Medical Officer's directives. We have also strictly enforced the policy that any staffing working elsewhere are asked to only commit to one workplace until further notice. This has resulted in a couple resignations.

An announcement came on Saturday April 25 that the provincial government was implementing an immediate Pandemic Pay \$4.00 hourly increase to essential workers in LTC and Retirement. Although final details are not made available as of this update, it will help to promote appreciation and efforts by our staff. Many staff have been cooperative and helpful in taking additional hours and duties for the best outcome possible.

Physical distancing practices are in place with residents needing to be 2m/6ft. apart both in the common areas and dining room. The dining room has been reconfigured so that only two residents sit at the ends of a six-foot table.

All formal activities have been ended with resident watching many movies, concerts and entertained by our staff. We implemented ZOOM virtual visits with family and staff have been working hard at making this happen each and every day. We have allowed families to see their loved ones through a front window that remains locked but families can at least get a glimpse of their loved one. Communication with families has been through an automated messaging system as well as Facebook posts and messages. As we receive new information or measures, we communicate these immediately.







The importance of constant sanitizing and disinfecting is quite clear. Residents continue to be reminded to wash hands and sanitize as much as possible. Staff wear masks while on the floor and must do so for every face to face interaction with residents. High touch areas of the building are sanitized and disinfected 3x daily – 7 days a week. The immediate access to regular cleaning products was slightly delayed but suppliers have been great in meeting our needs. Immediate funding has been made available to meet these expenses and additional funds will be coming in the next few months.

The struggle remains gaining access to critical PPE's. Although inventory trickles in, we're having to purchase from other suppliers. Both Ontario Health and ORCA have been helpful in sharing inventory as they have access to it. A big thank you goes to STITCH IT Canada for providing Villa Italia with 1000 reusable masks that have been distributed to our staff.

The challenge remains the social isolation for residents from their families. Many miss that human touch. For the most part all is well in that respect. The health and well being of our residents takes a daily effort of not only identifying those that may be ill, but also those experiencing social isolation and mental fatigue. Our

residents continue to be strong, healthy and stable. They are screened and assessed twice daily with an assessment of symptoms as well as temperature checks. The tremendous effort and commitment from all departments has been admirable. Management is here 24/7 in one manner or another. Access to consultation with the Executive Director and staff has been immediate.

As we continue to navigate this challenging time, we must continue cautiously and with a slight hesitation on priorities as restrictions may be lifted. Much planning has gone into creating staffing teams to meet the onset of an outbreak, segregating management team to ensure that operations will continue to run smoothly. As well, access to external staff if needed is also available with a staffing portal created by the LHIN's/Ontario Health.

The Board Chair and Executive Director remain in constant contact as new information becomes available. Family members have recognized our diligent efforts in many ways including food dropped off, signs outside and some powerful letters of support. I have included one below to share with the membership.

Pat Mostacci, Director

# Dear President Merolli,

I have always been proud of my membership in the Sons of Italy, but never as much as I am now. In 1980 when Nick Zaffiro sponsored me for membership, he spoke of a dream to have a retirement facility geared to look after our elderly with a flavor of our cultural heritage.

So, I participated in fund raising events, volunteered with many and even had the honour to organize and chair some. Never dreaming of the importance this dream of a retirement facility would one day play in my life.

Today my parents are into their 4th year living in Villa Italia. For my brother and I this has been a real blessing. To know that our beloved parents are safe, healthy, happy and lovingly cared for is peace of mind during this pandemic crisis the world is going through. Brother Pat Mostacci and the staff at Villa Italia have been and continue to do a tremendous job of protecting the seniors entrusted to their care. They entertain them, assist them with technology so they can at least see and speak with loved ones from the safety of the Villa, and continuously post photographs and videos for us outside to view.

# They are our front-line heroes!

We should all be grateful for them and praying for them.

May God bless them and continue to protect them so they can keep doing this much needed work with the love and care they have been giving.

Sincerely, Brother Robert Moscardini

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# Mark your Calendar

For those wishing to help with the following events, please see your Executive.

May General Meeting	Cancelled
Spaghetti Supper	Cancelled
Bowling Banquet	Cancelled
Choir's Spring Concert	Cancelled
June General Meeting [Elections]	Cancelled
Annual Golf Tournament	Cancelled

# Elimination Draw Update

Elimination Draw postponed until further notice, all tickets and payments that were purchased will be held until we can complete the draw. Due to the lottery license rules and regulations, refunds cannot be issued.



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