

AT THE FIVE FRIARS

part. That's me. I'm Molly Brown.' I had to fight for it, but I got to do it and I think I should have won the Oscar," said Reynolds.

Ellis said what everyone in attendance was thinking, that Debbie looks amazing for her age. He asked her how she takes care of herself, "Well, I'm not married," responded Debbie who got big laughs all afternoon.

Even at 77 years old, Reynolds is still going strong. She travels forty-two weeks a year around the country performing her act and that week had returned to New York City for the first time in twenty-five years. She earned rave reviews for her one-woman show that sold out The Carlyle Hotel.

Friar Producer Randie Levine-Miller noted, "Debbie has wanted to be a Friar for

Debbie Does The Friars

What a treat to have show business legend Friar Debbie Reynolds drop by for a celebrity lunch. Her filmography includes such classics as *Singin' In the Rain*, *Tammy and the Bachelor*, and *Mother*. Reynolds also scored three top-25 *Billboard* hits with *A Very Special Love*, *Am I That Easy to Forget?* and *Tammy*, so there was plenty to talk about when Debbie did the Friars.

Interviewing Debbie was journalist and author Ellis Nassour. They got down to business by discussing how Mary Frances Reynolds became Debbie Reynolds and joined the world of entertainment, "I entered this local beauty contest—Miss Burbank—and I borrowed a bathing



Ellis Nassour, Friar Randie Levine-Miller, Friar Debbie Reynolds

suit from the Salvation Army because I didn't have money, and it had a hole in the rear end and that's why I won. A hole in won," joked Reynolds. After winning the contest she went to Warner Brothers studio for an audition and the rest is show biz history.

Reynolds considers one of the major turning points in her career to be her role in *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* for which she received her first Oscar nomination for best



Dean Freddie Roman presents Debbie with her Honorary Membership

actress. "It was a lovely part. I saw it in New York with Tammy Grimes. I sat in the audience and I was mesmerized. I said, 'I have to play that



Ellis Nassour, Debbie and her co-star in Broadway's *Irene* George S. Irving

fifty years and today Dean Freddie Roman is going to wave his magic wand and make it happen." The Dean did just that, saying, "You are now a member of this Club and your first bill will be twelve hundred and forty four dollars." To which Reynolds snapped, "Get it out of Eddie Fisher—or Harry Karl, another schmuck." Roman explained, "Debbie married two Jews and wasn't thrilled with either one," which prompted her to say, "It wasn't the Jewish part, they were just jerks." Let's hope she has a better relationship with the Friars than she had with her ex-husbands.

Debbie noted, "I'm gonna hang out here." She certainly fits right in and we hope to see her back real soon.

Alexander's Treasure Grove

Pineapple Grove is a collection of short stories by Friar Gary Alexander which made its debut at the Monastery during a Book Warming/Reading in the Milton Berle Room. The book is a delightful tome full of Alexander's personal tales and memorable anecdotes and he shared three of the stories for the guests. His readings of *Santiago*, *The Party* and *Mort of Magic*, read in his seasoned voice-over lilt, were mesmerizing—not to mention sometimes hilarious. It made everyone clamber to read the rest of the stories.



Friars BJ Bjorkman, Gary Alexander, Anita Gillette



Friar Gary Alexander entertains the crowd

Photos by Michael Caputo

Songs & Laughter

John DeMarco is one of the top Cabaret singers in the world having performed on stages across the globe from Paris to Las Vegas to New York. The great Walter Winchell once described him as "The Voice That Wishes You Love" and there was plenty of love in the room when the Friars held a special night of music and comedy produced by the two time MAC award-winner.

DeMarco also served as master of ceremonies noting, "I'm thrilled to be a Friar. It was very hard for me to find the right talent putting



Karen Saunders, Hazelle Goodman, Friar John DeMarco, Friar Michele Balan, Friar Barry Levitt

together my first show here and I wanted to really have the best comedians and singers." He found them for sure.

Friar Michele Balan supplied the humor with a list of things that you will never hear a Jew say like, "I'll have it exactly the way it's prepared...It's in the back of my pick-up truck...and, I've never been happier."



Friar John DeMarco

Photos by Richard Lewin

Karen Saunders (*The Bottom Line*, *Don't Tell Mama*), Hazelle Goodman (*Deconstructing Harry*) and DeMarco himself kept everyone in the Milton Berle Room tapping their toes along with musical director Barry Levitt. It was a wonderful night of class, songs and laughs!

Celebrities Tell All

Michael Riedel of the NY Post called *Celebrity Autobiography: In Their Own Words* "The funniest show in town, hands down." It's a simple concept really, having celebrities read from the heartfelt writings of other celebrities. Friar Rick Newman, knowing how much the Friars love a good time—and laugh, brought the Drama Desk



Friar Rick Newman, Michael Urie, Rachel Dratch, Friar Alan Zweibel, Friar Joy Behar, Friar Susie Essman, Eugene Pack, Dayle Reyfel, Richard Kind, Sherri Shepherd

Award-winning show to the Monastery for a fun-filled night.

Eugene Pack is the creator of the show and he served as the host for the evening, commenting, "We've read over a hundred celebrity autobiographies and we've touched on themes such as women who have slept with Burt Reynolds, also known as "Burt Offerings," and days and nights at the Betty Ford Center also known as "Liza's Back."

The company of performers included: Rachel Dratch (reading Joan London's autobio), Friar Joy Behar (reading *You Have To Stand For Something Or You'll Fall For Anything* by her former *The View* co-host Star Jones), Friar Alan Zweibel (read-



Photos by Richard Lewin

Sherri Shepherd, Michael Urie, Richard Kind and Rachel Dratch read from the autobiographies of Friars Debbie Reynolds, Eddie Fisher, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton

ing Motley Crüe drummer Tommy Lee's book), Dayle Reyfel (reading Marilu Henner), Friar Susie Essman (Ivana Trump), and Sherri Shepherd (reading *My Life* by the one and only notorious author/actor/ladies man-Burt Reynolds).

All were great along with Michael Urie's, hysterical and over-the-top reading of *My Turn* by Nancy Reagan, "I've had my ups and downs with all four children but my relationship with Patty has been one of the most difficult and disappointing aspects of my life. Somehow, no matter what I do we seem to square off and it's been this way from the start. When I was pregnant with Patty I would wake up in the middle of the night unable to take in any air. Once, I even saw myself in the mirror turning green. It was frightening."

Richard Kind reading *Vanna Speaks* by the Emily Dickinson of celebrity autobiographies Vanna White, "I think of my job as that of a cheerleader. Of course, as you know my main job is turning the letters. Merv says that he hired me because I turn the letters better than any of the two hundred other women who auditioned. What's my secret? As I told *60 Minutes*, it must be in the wrists."

Don't Stop With The Laughs

"Stop Me If You Heard It," produced and hosted by everyone's favorite Friar Mickey Freeman, of *Sergeant Bilko* fame, has become one of the most popular shows at the Monastery. Mickey promised plenty of laughter, even going so far as to recommend in the invitation for guests to "bring a change of underwear!"

The lineup of comedians and storytellers included Dean Freddie Roman, Friar Dick Capri, Friar Bobby Ramsen, and Van Harris who got things started right after his introduction by asking Mickey, "Are you still on Height Watchers?" Mickey told him, "It's good to be short, you're the last to know when it rains."

Our very own Friars *Epistle* "East 55th St. Beat" columnist Friar Jerry Coe served as the moderator, throwing out random categories to the comedians who had no advance notice on what they would be. Yet, somehow they were still able to fire off plenty of hilarious material on the spot.



Dean Freddie Roman, Van Harris, Friars Mickey Freeman, Jerry Coe, Dick Capri, Bobby Ramsen

Coe didn't do so bad himself, tossing out a joke on the topic of seniors: "Billy Crystal goes to a senior citizen home and says to this little old lady, "Do you know who I am?" And she says, "No, but if you go to the reception desk, they'll tell you."

There are too many jokes, adlibs and quips to share here on all kinds of topics so we'll just leave you with one of Mickey's jokes: This guy goes to the doctor and says, "Doc, me and my wife are having problems with our sex life," and the doctor asks, "How often do you have sex?" The guy calls his wife to ask her, "Honey, how often did you and I have sex last month?" and the wife says, "Who's calling?"



Photos by Richard Lewin

Friar Dick Capri, Dean Freddie Roman, Van Harris, Friar Jerry Coe and Friar Mickey Freeman

Moreno's Memories

Rita Moreno's long and varied career includes the distinction of being the only Hispanic female (and one of only ten performers ever) who have won an Oscar, Grammy, Emmy and a Tony. All of those accolades didn't prevent her from receiving some teasing from the Friars Club at her salute produced by Friars Alison Chaplin, Howard Rapp and Fran and Lou Zigman.

Dean Freddie Roman kicked things off by saying, "I was not scheduled to be here, but I came tonight because I was honored to be here on a night when our Club honors Chita Rivera." When the Dean announced he was only kidding, the very quick-witted Rita rushed to the stage and said, "That's OK, Mr. Stone."

With that, the salute was on with the real Friar Stewie Stone, in his role as emcee, taking the stage and introducing celebrity audience members such as Friars Fyvush Finkel, David Dinkins and Dominic Chianese.

There was both music and comedy which was fitting for Rita who is a master in both genres. Musical tributes by performers William Michaels, Dudu Fisher, Michael Amante, Michele Lee and Friar Len Cariou, who co-



Rita Moreno

starred with Rita in the movie *The Four Seasons*, kept everyone in good spirits.

The comedy was also first rate with Friar Pat Cooper giving Moreno the Friars royal treatment by roasting the guest of honor, "I came here from California. I thought it was Rita Hayworth. Why the fuck is she here? The last time I saw her she was singing with muppets. Puerto Ricans don't fuck around with things on their hands like that."

Friar Cory Kahaney joked, "I met my husband in a bar which is generally not a good idea. Girls know that's like going grocery shopping when you're hungry and you bring home shit you don't need."

Friar Tom Cotter was a hit quipping, "The other night my friends got me to go see the opera with some duct tape and some ether and I



Prior Stewie Stone and Rita Moreno

have to say that it lasted longer than puberty. My God, five fat guys in leotards singing about a fat chick with a Viking helmet for three hours in a foreign language. People ask, 'Did you feel any emotion?' Yes, rage."

The star of the night, however, was Ms. Moreno herself. She took the stage to a rousing standing ovation. The classy Rita noted, "Every performer always has some wonderful moments in their lives. The kind that they can go to their memory bank to pull out and savor. I'm thinking of the moment when Jerry Robbins called me and said you got the part for the movie to be Anita. I'm thinking of sitting at the Academy Awards with my mom and they called my name. And *this* has become another really special moment for me, this evening. Thank you." She then ended the show with a knock-out performance of *With One Look* from the musical *Sunset Boulevard*.



Photos by Richard Lewin

Michael Amante, Friar Len Cariou, Fran Zigman, Lou Zigman, William Michaels, Michelle Lee, Dean Freddie Roman, Dudu Fisher, Friar Howard Rapp, Friar Cory Kahaney, Friar Tom Cotter, Friar Alison Chaplin, Prior Stewie Stone, Rita Moreno



Class Is In Session



Photo by Michael Caputo

Professor Friar Bob Gerardi with Friars Club Film Festival President Charlie Prince

Among Friar Bob Gerardi's impressive credentials is a respected film professor with New York University and he brought those classroom skills to the Monastery as part of his Classic Film Club series. Recreating his highly acclaimed NYU course and lecture series, "The History and Aesthetics of Film Music" the Friars were treated to a fun lesson while screening the 1938 classic *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, starring Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland.

Gerardi took his Friar students through various segments to answer the question "What does music do for a movie?" Gerardi is a well-informed and engaging lecturer, just add popcorn, a fun film and Friars and everyone goes to the head of the class.

The Always Roasting Ross

Friar Jeffrey Ross has taken his skills for roasting and put them into a new book, *I Only Roast The Ones I Love; Busting Balls Without Burning Bridges*. That title so warrants a book warming and so it was a night filled with, well, ball busting.

Ross introduced his buddy Friar Abe Vigoda, who noted, "Jeffrey Ross talks about me—mostly



Friar Jeffrey Ross roasts Friar Abe Vigoda—with love

that I'm dead." Abe has achieved nirvana in coming to terms with Ross' never-ending and hilariously loving abuse at every Roast he attends.

When Friar Dick Capri approached the stage, Jeffrey suggested he read what he wrote in his book to which Capri quipped, "I'm not doing your jokes—you do mine!" Friar Pat Cooper commented, "Everything Jeffrey tries, he fails.



Photos by Richard Lewin

Friar Danny Aiello re-lives his own roast through Ross' funny memories

Dancing With the Stars—he fell down! If there's one fucking adlib that I said in this book I'm taking you to court!"

Friar Cory Kahaney said that Jeffrey told her she burns more bridges than the Nazis, "Which is why you don't know who I am!"

Ross, ever the roaster, said, "Oprah picked the book as a favorite. She read 'roast' and thought it was a cookbook."

There were way too many more laughs to include so just go buy the book and you'll see why Ross is one of the top roasters at any Friars or Comedy Central Roast.

Lampanelli's Chocolate Covered Book Warming



Friar Lisa Lampanelli is all ferklept over her book

Friar Lisa Lampanelli has put her wisdom about men, dieting and other delectable tidbits into a new book entitled *Chocolate, Please: My Adventures in Food, Fat and Freaks*. Of course, the Friars just had to celebrate Lisa's unique brand of humor with a book warming.

According to Lisa, "It's an autobiography that details my life with the chocolate daddies, my dating struggles, my food and codependency problems, my childhood," all told with hilarious results.

We would add more of what the Queen of Mean had to say but other than the borderline comment she made when introducing her fiancé, "I'm engaged to a wop," there's nothing else printable. But with Lisa, that's a good thing, it shows she'll be successfully working and writing books for a very long time.



Photos by Richard Lewin

Lisa's comedian fans: Friars Jeffrey Ross, Steven Scott, Tom Cotter, Bob Greenberg, Nancy Lombardo and Lisa's "Italian" fiancé Jimmy

Night of Italian Stars

Friar comedian Jennifer Palumbo brought a change of pace to the Monastery producing and hosting "Mambo Italiano Comedy Nite!" Having it on the same night as the Friars Italian Nite menu gave it a double dose of cheese and spice.

Palumbo noted, "The difference between Jews and Italians is Italians are just happy Jews." She continued, "Palumbo is Italian for pigeon. My dad likes to tell people it means 'warrior eagle,' but he's full of shit. Kind of like a pigeon so it works out well."



Joe DeVito, Mike Siscoe, Friar Geno Bisconte, Friar Jennifer Palumbo, Mary Dimino

Joe Devito, a regular comic on *The Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson*, does a lot of traveling and noted, "I really hate flying out of LaGuardia because now they make you change planes in the Hudson River."

Mike Siscoe talked about his experience going abroad, "Traveling in Montreal, a French Canadian gave me crap for being an American, 'Hey, at least here in Canada we don't torture.' The hell you don't. I sat through that whole Celine Dion thing in Las Vegas."

Mary Dimino said, "I've been every size. I'm the white Oprah. My biggest weight—256 pounds. Lowest weight I ever got—130. After a lot of hard



Photos by Richard Lewin

Producer/Host Friar Jennifer Palumbo

work I'm down to 168. I'm like the New York Stock Exchange, buy me now while I'm low."

Friar Geno Bisconte joked, "I'm here for you. This isn't what I do for fun. If I want to have fun I'll run into an AA meeting with a scotch and say, 'Here's to you, you fucking quitters.' I know because sometimes my dad would drink so much that my mom would fall down the stairs."

A fun night with some great paisans who proved that Italians are good for much more than just cooking and "waste management."

The Friars Real Housewife

Friar Jill Zarin from the BRAVO hit reality series *The Real Housewives of New York City* stopped by the Club for a Celebrity Luncheon where she got to dish the dirt on the show, her fellow housewives and her personal life.

Friar Lisa Lampanelli introduced Jill noting, "When I got an email from Jill Zarin asking if I would introduce her I thought the same thing I always do when I get an email from Jill, 'What does this crazy Jew bitch want now?'"

Producer Friar Sharon Klein interviewed Jill, explaining that the two have been pals and neighbors for many years having first met when Klein helped Zarin find a band for her first wedding.

Zarin talked about how she and her fellow housewives were selected which, of course, was full of the drama the show is known for, so we'll



The Real Housewives: Friar Jill Zarin, Ramona Singer, LuAnn de Lesseps (seated)

pass on sharing the long, but interesting tale.

Klein asked how the real Jill Zarin is different from the Jill Zarin on the show, "I'm not different. I think you get what you see and you see what you get." Her parents, sister and aunt in the audience all agreed as did her fellow cast-mates LuAnne and Ramona.



Friars Sharon Klein, Jill Zarin

Two Tomes for the Price of One

The best thing to come out of *Law & Order SVU* is that Friar Richard Belzer has gotten so much mileage out of his Detective Munch character. Last year, the Friars were treated to a Book Warming when he wrote *I Am Not A Cop* where his longest-running character on television inspired the Belz to become a crime solver himself. Thankfully, he didn't stop there and this year he came out with *I Am Not A Psychic* where he reluctantly takes on a legendary assas-



Friars Richard Belzer and Robert Klein—a true fan

sin, a powerful political family, and a group of mobsters to determine who killed a beautiful young actress nearly thirty years earlier. Book Warming here we come!

As it happened, Belzer's good buddy Friar Paul Shaffer also came out with his new book, *We'll Be Here For The Rest Of Our Lives*. How does a kid go from a remote Canadian town to the bright lights of Broadway? We find out in this witty and soulful book from lapping up his first applause standing at the organ in his synagogue

at age twelve to appearing before millions every night on *Late Show With David Letterman*. Combined Book Warmings here we come!

The two Friars celebrated their tomes together which created quite the mob in the Milton Berle Room—and a fun mob at that. They even showed



Friar Allen Toussaint, Phoebe Snow, Friar Paul Shaffer

a video to share the first time Belzer and Shaffer appeared together on television which was a hilarious walk down memory lane for everyone. Their guests included Gilbert Gottfried, politician Mark Green, Friar Robert Klein, Friar Jeffrey Ross, Phoebe Snow and Friar Allen Toussaint.

Susie Says, Buy My F%&ing Book

Friar Susie Essman has a new book out called, *What Would Susie Say? Bullsh*t Wisdom About Love, Life and Comedy*, and since Friars love hearing every word she does utter, a Book Warming was in order.

Friars couldn't get enough of the *Curb Your Enthusiasm* star and started buying books and



Friar Susie Essman with her buddy the Friars Grand Jestress Joy Behar

lining up for her autograph even before the event officially started. Within a half hour the books were sold out and members were combing the streets in search of book stores so they could buy one, run back and have it signed.

Friar Alan Zweibel introduced Susie to come up and say a few words. He suggested that the only thing she has in common with her TV char-



Friar Alan Zweibel and Friar Susie Essman

acter Susie Greene is her foul mouth. Susie, ever the gracious Friar, thanked everyone for coming, although Susie Greene may have slipped through when she screamed at them to buy the book!



Friars Steven Scott, Susie Essman, Mario Macaluso

9-Balls

Sixty-two Friars competed in the 18th Annual 9-Ball Tournament with the semi-finals and champion match in the Milton Berle Room on a pool table donated by Friar Ronnie Blatt, who sponsored the tournament.

Co-chaired by Friars Bernard Tedlis, Harold Siegel and Larry Schatz, the tournament matches were neck and neck hair-raisers right down to the last 9-Ball. Not to mention quite a few upsets which added sparkle to the competition. The top honor went to Friar Michael Albert with Friar Harold Siegel in second place and a tie between



Friars Bernie Kraisman, Ron Blatt, Michael Albert, Harold Siegel, Bernard Tedlis

Bernie Kraisman and Bernard Tedlis in third. Finishing out the top ten, starting with fourth place were Friars Scott Bloom, Robert Morie, Jr., John Kovacs, Paul Ginsberg, John Watkins and Dan Faucetta. There was a three-way tie for tenth place: Friars Al Caz, Stephen Greenfield and Burton Rocks.

Entertainment was superbly provided by Friar Phil Terman's Jazz quintet and beautiful singing by Toni Carroll.

The brilliantly designed color poster for the tournament was produced by Friar Esther Goodhart's son, artist Isaac Goodhart and Friar Jerry Liebowitz made up specially designed T-shirts. Thanks also to Friars General Manager Michael Caputo for his attention to details and to Lydia, the receptionist, for the many phone calls.

Rio's All That Jazz

Cocktails with Jazz got a whole lot jazzier when Friar Rio Clemente made his appearance in the



Laura Hull and Friar Rio Clemente

Lucille Ball Room. Clemente, whose jazz stylings on the piano are a must for any jazz and cabaret club, entertained the members with his cool, smooth sounds. Laura Hull joined Rio to make some beautiful music together as she sang to his jazzy beat.

—Jerry Coe, Allan Kreda and Michael Matuza are contributing writers to Live at the Friars

Photos by Richard Lewin



SYTYCR Reunion

The Friars Club Presents: So You Think You Can Roast?! contest saw nineteen talented comedians compete through a series of in-house roasts after which the winner got to roast Matt Lauer. Several SYTYCR contestants re-united this summer for a special show. This time they had the opportunity to perform their own stand-up material. The result was another big hit.

Friar Maureen Langan, who was a judge during the contest, served as emcee. She kicked things off in the Friars roast tradition, "We're going to have some fun because we are going to have those people who thought they could roast but found out they couldn't." She continued with, "Pretty people rule the world, we know this. What does Paris Hilton do? I saw her being interviewed recently and she said sometimes she feels so depressed she feels like blowing her brains out and I thought go ahead, how messy could it be?"

Friar Dave Konig, a three-time Emmy-winner, was the first up saying, "I got a recurring role on *Law & Order*. Not the big famous *Law & Order*. I was on one of the spin-offs, *Law & Order Parking Violations Bureau*. It was on right after *CSI Poughkeepsie*. Next week you can see me on *Survivor East Hampton*. Six Jews on the beach with no sun block." Konig also brought up hungry fellow Friar Bob Greenberg for some extra fun and laughs!

Friar Esther Ku, a semi-finalist on NBC's *Last Comic Standing* said, "A lot has happened since our roast shows. Barack Obama became President. My parents are kind of confused. They're like, why does everybody call him Barack Obama? They think it's all about race because that's how Asians say black-Barack."

Friar Dan Shaki, who survived the roast of Omarosa, deadpanned, "I used to work as a tour guide on the double-decker buses here in New York City and by 'used to' I mean earlier today and also probably tomorrow."

Friar Nancy Lombardo roasted Big Pussy (Friar Vincent Pastore) so it was funny to see her in full habit as character Sister Mary, "What do you get when you cross a penis, a potato and a Pope? A holy dictator."

Friar Sam Morril was recently featured as a hot stand-up in *Time Out NY*. He impressed again on this

rican up in here. That means I will stab you, but then I will represent myself in court later on and win."

Friar Nasry Malak who appeared in Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 911* turned up the heat, "I'm an Egyptian-American comedian. A lot of comedians brag about



Friars Adam and Todd Stone

Photos by Richard Lewin



(From the top): Friars Bryan Kennedy, John Sialiano, Dan Shaki, Mike Morse, Nasry Malak, Sam Morril, Dave Konig (Front): Friars Esther Ku, Nancy Lombardo, Christina Galston, Maureen Langan

night, "I read that a 420 pound woman gave birth to a baby. She didn't even know she was pregnant. Why don't they print the real shocking story? Somebody slept with a 420 pound woman!"

Friar Christina Galston appears frequently at Carolines, sometimes opening for Paul Mooney. A job she got after Mooney, serving as Roastmaster at Omarosa's event, saw her in action. She joked about her ethnic make-up, "I'm one hundred percent Jew-

their great shows. I have a lot of friends who have done a lot of bar mitzvah's. I play a lot of Passover dinners where by the end of the night I just tell everyone they are free to go home."

Friar Bryan Kennedy hosts the very popular World Series of Comedy at Carolines. He joked, "I love being a Friar especially when I hang out in the steam room. You old bastards make me feel like Brad Pitt."

Friar Mike Morse hosts a popular radio show on Sirius and admits to naively smuggling thirteen pounds of marijuana into the country, "Nobody told me you're supposed to put it in a bag first."

Friar/twins Adam and Todd Stone were big hits on *Last Comic Standing*. They discussed Jewish dating events, "We discovered that inevitably at these parties there are always some non-Jewish girls which is fine, we don't mind a shiksa, but we could always tell which ones they are because they are Asian."

Friar Goumba Johnny Sialiano, the winner of the SYTYCR contest, had the honor of closing the show. He provided the audience with some topical humor, "I was touched Michael Jackson's brother Jermaine was on Larry King right after he died. He said, 'I am so upset about my brother dying I wish it was me.' You took the words right out of our mouth."

FOUNDATION FRIENDS

The Friars may best be known for their searing sarcasm and biting wit but they also have a charitable side, which they showed at their Friars Foundation Annual Applause Award Gala presented by Foundation Chairman Ambassador Joseph Zappala. The Friars Foundation's mission fosters the performing arts through scholarships and contributions to theater companies. Their Adopt-A-Scholar Program helps students seeking an education, and ultimately, a career in the arts.

This year's dinner honored Friar Leslie Moonves, the President and CEO of CBS Corporation with the Foundation's Lifetime Achievement Applause Award and Friar Natalie Cole with their Creative Achievement Applause Award. They also honored Friar Tom Jones with a special Artistic Scholarship Award.

It was a banner night from Dinner Chairman Friar Bruce Charet with a show produced by Friar Mark Krantz. Ben Vereen

sang *To Dream The Impossible Dream* and Friar Lucie Arnaz performed *I Want To Be Rich, Famous & Powerful*.



Friar Dionne Warwick accepts Natalie Cole's Award from Isabella and Friar Ambassador Joseph Zappala



Marion and Friar Elie Wiesel with Friars Julie Chen and Leslie Moonves

Friar Norm Crosby joked, "It seems the only ones who want to get married these days are priests and homosexuals." Friar Robert Klein had just wrapped a CBS movie with Jennifer Lopez, "I have the greatest part ever invented—I play JLo's gynecologist."

Friar Elie Wiesel presented Moonves with his honor. The Nobel Laureate noted the sculpted hands raised in applause on the award, "Hands should never become fists." He lauded Moonves on how he handles his power to shape opinion. Moonves was touched by the accolades and acknowledged his wife, Friar Julie Chen who was expecting their first child—"the first Asian/Jewish Friar."

Natalie, still recuperating from a kidney transplant, asked Friar Dionne Warwick to

accept the award on her behalf. In her message to the audience read by Dionne, Natalie said, "I was so looking forward to this night and being honored by the Friars Foundation but I guess it was not meant to be. We plan-God laughs! I cannot say I am completely sad because something miraculous and wonderful happened in its place." Dionne then sang *That's What Friends Are For*.



Friar Tom Jones, Ben Vereen, Dean Freddie Roman

Photos by Richard Lewin

"He has swiveled his way into the hearts of thousands of fans," noted emcee Dean Freddie Roman of Jones. Paul Shaffer gave kudos to his buddy Tom as well.

Noting that he's a singer, not a talker, Jones belted out *It's Not Unusual* and *The Green, Green Grass of Home*. He closed the show with his signature hit *What's New Pussycat!* A great night to honor three greats in showbiz—Friar style.

— Barry Dougherty