



ORDER
Sons and
Daughters
of Italy
IN AMERICA

La Bandiera

***The Banner
Newsletter of
The Italian Heritage Lodge #2517
Fairfax, Virginia
Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America***

**MAGGIO 2026
MESSAGGIO DEL PRESIDENTE**

Ciao Amici,

Springtime is in full bloom, the weather is getting nicer, and we have many things planned for our Lodge in the coming months. Our monthly social in April with guest speaker and Author Tony DeSantis was a success and was very well attended. Dawn and Steve made a lovely dinner, and everyone enjoyed themselves as they listened to the intriguing story of Tony's immigrant father and his journey to America. For those who may have purchased the book or were the lucky winners of a copy through our raffle, it was a fascinating and enjoyable read. It may have even inspired you to write your own Italian family immigrant story.

Our next social event is our Italian Bingo Night, which is Saturday, May 23rd. As a friendly reminder, we will be having an election for a permanent Orator and for five members of the Arbitration Committee. We encourage all members to attend. I want to extend a very warm welcome to the newest member of our Lodge, Tony Carbonello, and I would like to congratulate Steve Kramer, our Financial Secretary, on earning his Doctorate in Education. Congratulations Steve!

Take care everyone and I hope to see you all on May 23rd.

***Best,
Michael Gering
IHL President***

IL CALENDARIO

10 maggio

La Festa della Mamma

13 maggio	Executive Council Mtg.	6:00 p.m.	Pohick Reg. Library 6450 Sydenstricker Rd. Burke, VA (Room 2)
23 maggio	Italian Bingo*	5:00 p.m.	Knights Hall/St. Leo
23 maggio	Cena e Conversazione	6:00 p.m.	The Mignani's

25 maggio

Memorial Day

2 giugno

Festa della Repubblica Italiana

13 giugno (20 giugno)	Bocce Picnic** <i>Rain Date for Bocce Picnic</i>	Noon–4 p.m.	The Lillo's
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21 giugno

Festa del Papá

27 giugno	GLVA Quarterly Meeting AND USA 250 th Anniversary Celebration Picnic***	11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Giuseppe Verdi Lodge 7242 Verdi Lane Mechanicsville, VA
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* RSVP to Steve Kramer (steven.kramer52@gmail.com)

** RSVP to Ellie Lillo (delillo1@verizon.net)

***RSVP to Mary Louise Smith (MLSmith912@comcast.net)

Italian Bingo, our annual favorite, takes place on *Saturday, May 23rd* at 5:00 p.m. The cost for playing 15 games of bingo, pizza and beverages is \$25. Come for the fun and great Italian prizes!

It's Bocce time again! Our annual Bocce Picnic will be held on *Saturday, June 13th (WITH A RAIN DATE OF SATURDAY, JUNE 20th)*, noon to 4:00 p.m. Dennis & Ellie Lillo will host our lodge members, families and guests who come ready to play and eat! See the flyer in this issue of *La Bandiera*.

The Grand Lodge of Virginia has invited all IHL members to their picnic celebrating our nation's 250th Anniversary to take place on *Saturday, June 27th* at Giuseppe Verdi Lodge! Please see the flyer in this issue for more information.



ITALIAN HERITAGE LODGE

"ITALIAN BINGO NIGHT"

SATURDAY, MAY 23RD

5:00 PM TO 9:00 PM

ST. LEO KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL

3702 BLENHEIM BOULEVARD, FAIRFAX

(BEHIND ST. LEO THE GREAT CHURCH)



15 Bingo
Games
and
Pizza Dinner
for \$25.00

WIN Italian Prizes:
WINES,
CHOCOLATES,
COFFEE, PASTA,
OLIVE OIL,
CERAMICS, SOAPS,
& MORE

RSVP to Steve Kramer: steven.kramer52@gmail.com

IHL Bocce at the Lillo's



When: Saturday, June 13, 2026

RAIN DATE IS: Saturday, June 20, 2026

Where: 5104 Colebrook Place
Alexandria, VA 22312

Time: 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Hosted by

Eleanor and Dennis Lillo

Menu: Grilled Hamburgers & Hot Dogs with all the Fixings,
Sausage & Peppers, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Desserts
& Cold Beverages

**There will be a charge of \$20 per person for this event.
Make check payable to IHL and mail to 5104 Colebrook Place,
Alexandria, VA 22312.**

Please confirm your attendance by June 9th!
RSVP who will be attending and who will
play in the bocce tournament.

By email: delillo1@verizon.net

By telephone: (703) 354-2454

**This event is sponsored by the
Italian Heritage Lodge of Fairfax
for Lodge members and their families**



Come and enjoy the fun!

GRAND LODGE OF VIRGINIA
QUARTERLY MEETING
and
USA 250th YEAR CELEBRATION

The Grand Lodge of Virginia extends an invitation to
your membership in joining a day of Celebration of our
country's
250th Anniversary of Independence.

!!COME JOIN US!!

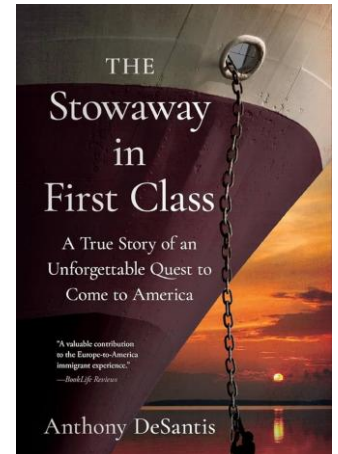
WHEN: Saturday, June 27, 2026
7242 Verdi Lane
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

TIME: 1:00 p.m.
After Grand Lodge Quarterly Meeting
Bocce, Cornholes, Bingo, Music
Hamburgers and Hot Dogs provided by GLVA.
Everyone asked to bring a covered dish!

Please coordinate with Mary Louise Smith
How many attending ?
What dish you will bring?
(MLSmith912@comcast.net) or
(804) 241-2185



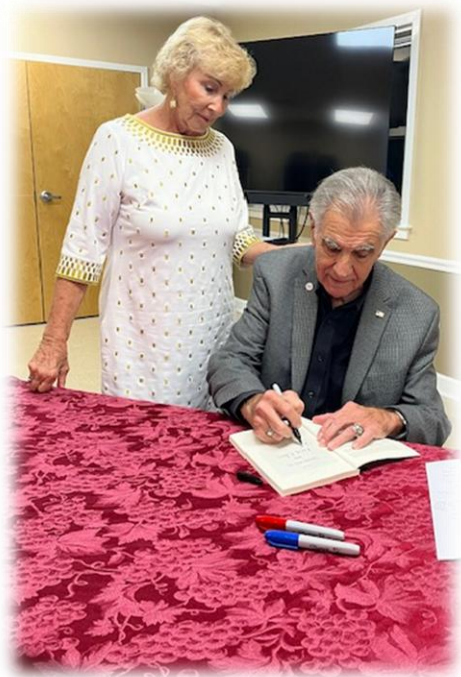
Anthony DeSantis
"The Stowaway in First Class"
Saturday, April 18, 2026



Author Anthony DeSantis presented his book, a soon-to-be movie, with a behind-the-scenes journey of bringing a family legacy from print to film. Tony also highlighted his passion for his heritage and his father's immigration story as the 'stowaway' main character of the book. Tony shared with our members his excitement of his story about immigration, Italian heritage, the importance of knowing your family's history and the encouragement to record them. Attendees were very welcoming to Tony and his wife Judy.

Thank you to Alyssa Ciccone and Dawn for bringing this event to IHL members and guests. We are also thankful to those who worked hard to prepare the delicious meals, set up the hall as well as stay longer to clean up after the evening's event: Chef Dawn Falsinotti and Sous Chef Steve Kramer, Mike Gering, Jim Cocco, Coletta Sciscilo, Pam Pasquariello, Dolly Dougherty, Tony Carbonello, Kathy Santangelo, Chef Nick, Patty and others. *Grazie per l'aiuto!*





Photographs courtesy of Coletta Sciscilo

*We welcomed our new member Anthony “Tony” Carbonello to the April presentation and book signing with Tony DeSantis, which he very much enjoyed. Tony, who lives in Alexandria, joined IHL in April and was happy to meet and talk to all the members and guests in attendance.
BENVENUTO, TONY!*



MAY BIRTHDAYS

June La Marca	May 10
Joseph Scafetta Jr.	May 10
Tony Carbonello	May 11
John Asiello	May 17
Linda Berona	May 23
John Dovel	May 23
Michael Welch	May 24

Cena e Conversazione!

“Carissimi,

April was a huge success. Thanks to Francesca and Marianna for their work in hosting us at Francesca’s elegant home. Fran’s seafood salad antipasto, with tomatoes, roasted peppers and olives, was wonderful. Peter’s butternut squash ravioli with pesto and Marianna’s chicken marsala, accompanied by Dennis’ sourdough bread, were delicious as our primo and secondo Piatti. Desserts – June’s ricotta cake with Limoncello, Fran’s daughter’s raisin rum cake and Kathleen’s trifle – were spectacular. Thanks Fran, for the recipe for the raisin rum cake.

We had good Italian conversation, from jokes to Il Gattopardo, and a helpful review of useful transition words. June, thanks for sending us the vocabulary list to reinforce the review.

Next month, we will be at Carlo and Betsy’s. We meet on the 23rd of May!

*Un caro salute,
Dennis”*



Inquiries should go through Dennis Ferrara for the next monthly gathering of Cena e Conversazione. dennisferrara@hey.com

“The Cirelli Family 70th Reunion”

By Dennis & Eleanor Lillo

The Cirelli family held its 70TH family reunion and bowling tournament on April 19th, 2026, in Lodi, NJ. There were 113 attendees at the catered dinner and 60 bowlers competing in eight divisions based on two-year averages. Dennis Lillo’s grandmother Margaret was one of nine Cirelli children born of immigrant Italian parents, six boys and three girls, who started this tradition in 1955. The only time the reunion was not held was for two years due to the Covid epidemic. The banner depicting the Cirelli Family Tree was a new addition specially prepared for the 70th Reunion by cousin Alysia Dagrosa, one of Margaret’s great-granddaughters.



Festa della Mamma

Celebrating Mother's Day The Italian Way

Mother's Day is a special occasion celebrated worldwide, and Italy is no exception. Known for their strong family ties and deep respect for mothers, Italians celebrate *Festa della Mamma* with heartfelt traditions and expressions of love. While the specific date may vary slightly from country to country, in Italy, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday of May. So, how do Italians honor their "Mamma" on this special day? Let's take a look at some of the traditions:

A Feast for the Queen (of the Family):

Food plays a central role in Italian celebrations, and Mother's Day is no different. Often, families will gather for a special meal, either at home or in a restaurant. This is a chance for mothers to relax and be pampered, while other family members take over the cooking and serving duties. Expect to see delicious pasta dishes, roasted meats, and of course, plenty of delectable desserts. Regional specialties often take center stage, showcasing the diverse culinary landscape of Italy.

Flowers, Flowers Everywhere:

Flowers are a classic gift for Mother's Day in Italy. While red roses are a popular choice, symbolizing love and admiration, other flowers are also given. Often, the choice of flower depends on the personal preference of the mother. A beautiful bouquet or a potted plant is a thoughtful way to show appreciation.

Handmade Gifts and Heartfelt Gestures:

While store-bought gifts are appreciated, handmade presents hold a special significance. Children often create cards, drawings, or small crafts to express their love for their mothers. These personalized gifts, made with love and effort, are treasured keepsakes. Even adult children often make an effort to do something special for their mothers, whether it's helping with chores, spending quality time together, or simply expressing their gratitude.

Family Time is Key:

Perhaps the most important aspect of Mother's Day in Italy is spending quality time with family. It's a day to celebrate the bond between mothers and their children, and to express appreciation for everything they do. Families often gather for lunch, dinner, or a simple afternoon visit. This is a time for sharing stories, laughter, and creating lasting memories.

A Day of Gratitude and Love:

Festa della Mamma is more than just a day for gifts and meals. It's a day to acknowledge the invaluable role that mothers play in our lives. It's a day to express gratitude for their love, support, and unwavering dedication. In Italy, the celebration of Mother's Day is a testament to the deep respect and affection that Italians have for their "Mamme."

So, if you're ever in Italy during the second Sunday of May, be prepared to witness a heartwarming celebration of motherhood. And if you have an Italian mother, make sure to give her an extra special hug and tell her how much you love her! *Buona Festa della Mamma!*





Torta Della Nonna

Torta della Nonna is a simple, rustic Italian dessert that is loved throughout Italy!

This homely tart consists of lemony, tender shortcrust filled with a luscious Italian pastry cream and is an absolutely ideal way to end any meal!!

Ingredients:

Custard

2 ½ cups whole milk
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
4 egg yolks
¾ cup superfine (castor) sugar
¼ cup all purpose flour

Pastry

2 cups all purpose flour
1 teaspoon lemon zest
½ teaspoon baking powder
Pinch salt
5 ounces unsalted butter cut into small chunks
½ cup superfine (castor) sugar
3 egg yolks
1 tablespoon pinenuts

To finish

Powdered sugar for dusting

Instructions:

To make the filling:

Heat the milk and vanilla extract in a medium saucepan until it just comes to the boil. Set aside to cool slightly.

In a medium bowl, use a wire whisk to beat the egg yolks and sugar well until light and creamy. Stir in the flour.

With a whisk, gradually add in the warm milk. Whisk well so that no lumps form.

Strain the milk mixture back into the saucepan. Return to the heat and stir (I like to use a whisk) until it thickens. Boil for about a minute to cook the flour.

Remove from the heat and pour into a clean bowl covering with plastic wrap. Press the plastic onto the surface of the filling to prevent a skin forming. Set aside to cool completely.

To make the pastry:

In a food processor place the flour, lemon zest, baking powder, salt and butter. Pulse until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.

Add the sugar and egg yolks then process until the mixture just starts to come together on the sides of the bowl. Remove and wrap in plastic wrap and chill for an hour.

Preheat oven to 350°F/180°C and grease a 10 inch/25cm tart pan with a removable base with non-stick cooking spray.

Soak pinenuts in a small bowl of water.

Divide the dough in two pieces, with one slightly larger.

Take the larger piece. Press it down to flatten and form a rough circle. Dust the pastry lightly with flour.

Roll out the larger piece between two pieces of nonstick baking paper until large enough to fit the tart pan. If the pastry is sticking, dust with a little more flour.

Roll the pastry gently around the rolling pin. Lift and unroll into the pan. Pull up the pastry around the sides and encourage it to fall into the corners. Patch tears with excess pastry. Trim the edges level to the top of the pan.

Spoon the cool pastry cream into the base. Spread and level the filling.

Roll out the second piece of pastry as you did with the first and fit over the pastry cream, pressing the edges to seal and then trim off excess. Brush the top with water.

Drain the pine nuts and sprinkle over the torta.

Bake in preheated oven for 40 minutes.

Allow to cool. Carefully remove torta from the pan and place on a serving plate. Dust with abundant powdered sugar. Serve at room temperature or chilled.



You can find this recipe on
Marcellinaincucina.com
under Italian desserts

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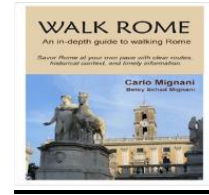
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CARLO AND BETSY MIGNANI have written a valuable guide to assist tourists who want to explore the Eternal City on their own with historical context and timely information. Available on Amazon, search “Walk Rome Mignani.”
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