La Bandiera

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

SETTEMBRE 2025
MESSAGGIO DELLA PRESIDENTESSA

Ciao amici,

Benvenuto settembre,

Even though Fall is my favorite time of the year, I'm going to miss Summer. It seems like it went by so quickly and I still want more. But I also love pumpkin spice everything and apple cider doughnuts, so here we go.

Italian Bingo was a hit with several new friends and members from the Italian Language Group joining us. Dinner was well received, and everyone seemed to have a good time.

Our next big event is our annual Meet & Greet Pasta Dinner on Sunday, September 28th. Invite your friends, family and neighbors but please don't forget to RSVP. Super Important! We have a great speaker scheduled, Mike DeBonis, and we'll have raffles and prizes for attendees. It's a fun night filled with lots of good food and fellowship.

We're busy planning out the rest of the year. Please, if you have ideas or interests, drop me a line and let me know.

See you at the Meet & Greet Pasta Dinner!

Ciao,
Dawn

IL CALENDARIO

10 settembre	**E.C. Meeting***	**6:30 p.m.**	**Kilroy's**
21 settembre	**GLVA Quarterly Meeting**	**11:00 a.m.**	**Giuseppe Verdi Lodge**
27 settembre	**Cena e Conversazione*** **		
28 settembre	**Meet & Greet Pasta Dinner** **	**5:00 p.m.**	**Knights Hall**
13 ottobre	**National Columbus Day Ceremony**	**11:00 a.m.**	**Columbus Plaza, Union Station, Washington, DC**
TBD	**House of Mercy Food Pantry Drive**		**Knights Hall**
TBD	**House of Mercy Food Pantry Drive**		**Knights Hall**

***** **RSVP to Dawn Falsinotti (falsinotti@yahoo.com)**
****** **RSVP to Steve Kramer (steven.kramer52@gmail.com)**
******* **RSVP to Dennis Ferrara (dennisferrara@hey.com)**

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Barbara Bifareti	September 6
Joe La Marca	September 6
Nannette Croce	September 14
Loretta D'Amico	September 17
Nancy Perrelli	September 17
John Innello	September 20
Marilyn Miyasato	September 20
Vivian Mott	September 22
Jeff Sciscilo	September 22

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Liz & Angelo Saladini	September 6
Heather & Eric Schena	September 9
Theresa & Robert Scola	September 18

Italian Heritage Lodge of Fairfax #2517
Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America

"Meet and Greet" Pasta Dinner

Sunday, September 28, 2025
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Knights of Columbus Hall
3702 Blenheim Boulevard, Fairfax
(behind St. Leo the Great Church)

***Meet** the Officers and Members of our Lodge*
while enjoying a traditional Pasta Dinner
&
***Greet** Guest Speaker Mike DeBonis*
*Senior Congress Editor, **Politico***

Cost $15.00
RSVP to: Steven Kramer
Steven.kramer52@gmail.com

Buon Appetito e Mangia Bene!

Mr. Mike DeBonis
Guest Speaker
Meet & Greet Pasta Dinner
Sunday, September 28, 2025
5:00 p.m.
Knights of Columbus Hall

Mike DeBonis was born and raised in northwest Indiana. After he graduated from high school in 2000, he was admitted to Georgetown University where he studied Russian and Linguistics, graduating in 2003. He went to work as a reporter for the Washington City Paper, serving in several roles as a reporter and editor, including writing a column about District of Columbia politics. In 2010, he left to cover local politics and government for the Washington Post, remaining focused on the D.C. city hall.

From 2015 to 2022, he covered Congress and national politics for the Post – serving as the paper's lead reporter in the House during President Trump's first term and the lead reporter in the Senate under President Biden. In 2022, he left the Post and joined Politico, a political news website, as editor of Playbook, its flagship political newsletter. He recently started as Politico's senior Congress editor. Mike resides in northeast D.C. with his wife, Dena, and their two children.

Mike's topic for our *Meet & Greet Pasta Dinner* will be the current political situation in Italy and Vatican City.

Let us give a warm welcome to Mike DeBonis!

You are invited to the

National Columbus Day Ceremony

Monday, October 13, 2025

Ceremony begins at 11 a.m.

Columbus Plaza

Union Station, Washington, DC

Featuring Wreath Presentations, Patriotic Music, Remarks from the Diplomatic Corps, the Columbus Essay Contest Winner, and more.

Sponsored by the
National Christopher Columbus Association.

www.christophercolumbus.org

Attention IHL Members !!

At our September 28 Meet & Greet Pasta Dinner, members will be given the opportunity once again this year, to submit your names for a random drawing to join with President Dawn to attend the National Columbus Day Ceremony at Columbus Plaza on Monday, October 13, 2025, and to also accompany her to the Monocle Restaurant after the ceremony for a free luncheon. Two IHL members will be selected.

Cena e Conversazione!

On Saturday, August 30th, the IHL Italian Language group met at Betsy and Carlo's home, taking advantage of the perfect weather to dine al fresco. Buon cibo e buona conversazione!

The goal of the IHL Language Group is to promote our Italian heritage through language by creating opportunities to practice and improve our ability to speak Italian. To that end, we strive to create a friendly and pleasant environment for our meetings. Specifically, we meet monthly in a social setting to speak as much Italian as we can.
Contact Dennis Ferrara at dennisferrara@hey.com for more information.

IHL FOOD DRIVE
TO BENEFIT
THE HOUSE OF MERCY
FOOD PANTRY

Grazie!
Donations of canned, boxed, packaged and plastic jarred foods will be collected at our October and November meetings - all to be delivered before Thanksgiving.

Keep your eyes open for information on upcoming IHL events for the remainder of the year:

September 28 – Meet & Greet Pasta Dinner with Guest Speaker
October/November – House of Mercy Food Pantry Donations
October – Italian Heritage Month/Columbus Day Celebration
November – Honoring our Veterans
December – Festa di Natale

Important Lodge Announcement

Molto grazie to Tommaso Ammazzalorso for stepping into the Executive Board position of Recording Secretary.

Tom's election to this office will be held at our September 28 membership meeting.

Thank you, Tom, and to all those serving in the important positions of our lodge Executive Council. Your dedication, time and talents will always be valued and appreciated.

Festa Italiana DC: Join Us This Fall for All Things Italian!

October 4-5 | Tanger Outlets, National Harbor, MD

Celebrate all things Italian with us this October! Hosted at the bustling Tanger Outlets in National Harbor, MD, our inaugural Festa Italiana D.C. will draw in thousands from the surrounding Washington, D.C. area for a two-day-long celebration of Italian food and culture.

With a variety of local vendors, including a special cooking demonstration from Galbani Cheese, Festa Italiana D.C. will have something for everyone. General admission is FREE, with special ticketed events to be announced in the coming weeks. Stay tuned! (Information provided by OSDIA.)

For Immediate Release

ORDER Sons and Daughters of Italy IN AMERICA

New National Officers and Trustees Installed at OSDIA's 59th Biennial National Convention

OSDIA National Officers being sworn in during the 59th Biennial National Convention.

ORLANDO, FLORIDA–On Saturday, new national officers and trustees were formally installed for the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America (OSDIA), the oldest and largest organization representing Italian-American men and women in the U.S.

These new national officers and trustees are comprised of OSDIA leaders from around the country who play important roles in growing and maintaining organizational success at all levels.

The installation ceremony took place in Orlando, Florida, during OSDIA's 59th Biennial National Convention (BNC), the largest and most significant gathering of the organization's leadership from around the country.

The new OSDIA national officers and trustees for the 2025-2027 term are as follows:

OSDIA Officers

National President: Comm. Thomas A. Lupo (NY)
National 1st Vice President: Kevin A. Caira (MA)
National 2nd Vice President: Dr. Mark DeNunzio (FL)
National 3rd Vice President: Brian M. Andzik (OH)
National 4th Vice President: Frank Gattuso, Esq. (NJ)
National 5th Vice President: Robert M. Ferrito (NY)
Immediate Past President: Michael G. Polo (CT)
National Orator: Anthony J. Perfilio, Esq. (OH)
National Recording Secretary: Lynn Lawrence-Murphy (CA)
National Financial Secretary: Biagio J. Isgro, Jr. (NY)
National Treasurer: Louis R. Santoro (NJ)
National Historian: Florence Guidara (MA)
National Chaplain: The Rev. R. Adam Forno (FL)

National Trustees

Arlene Nunziati (CA)
Joseph Facciolo (DE)
Gertrude Dorries (FL)
Anita Lombardi Riley (MD)
Denise Furnari (MA)
Diane Santoro (NJ)
Carolyn Reres (NY)
Linda Buccini Anderson (NW)
Jack Giambrone (OH)
Catena Spiritosanto (PA)

Arbitration Commission

Maria Fassio Pignati (CA)
Vincent Zaccaria (MD)
Philip Privitera (MA)
John Tornatore (CT)
Gloria Marano (OH)

Alternate Commissioners

Joseph Ilardi (NY)
Gina Toth Becker (PA)
Rudy Viscomi (MA)
Frank Froio (NJ)
Joseph Dente (FL)

Guests and delegates sit during the opening General Session of the 2025 BNC, August 12, 2025.

Photos courtesy of Robin Haden.

Summer Fun

Come along with our members as they share their summer memories……

Financial Secretary Steve Kramer with his youngest daughter Qin, who is a senior pre-med student at Northeastern University. These pictures are from Chinatown ~ she hangs out there quite a bit!

The St. Agrippina festival parade on August 3, which occurred on Hanover Street (Italian North End). We were having dinner at Lucia's (one of my favorite places). We heard the music when we left and got caught up in the festival parade.

The Art of Vacation

"Italians stop the hands of time by making vacations a priority. Ferragosto is the national vacation period during the month of August, in which the whole country seems to close down for several weeks. Stores close, cities are deserted by the local inhabitants, and everyone makes a grand departure to their summer destinations. Plans don't have to be elaborate as long as a clean break is made from the everyday tran-tran routine. The word "leisure" in English, comes from the Latin "licere," which means "permission." In general, there are two categories of people: those who give themselves permission and those who don't. Italians fall undisputably into the first category. They don't kid around when it comes to vacation as a means to "pull the plug" on stress. This characteristic summertime mass exit to ocean campsites and mountains is referred to as the Italian "exodus."

If you want to vacation "all'italiana, you don't have to go to Italy; all you have to do is remember to make whatever vacation you take be a real change from your everyday routine."

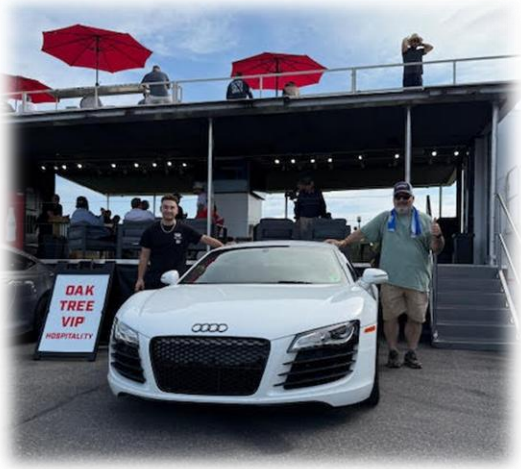
My two boys, Nick & Roy Jr., invited me to the Michelin GT Challenge at Virginia International Raceway (VIR) near Danville, VA, 22-25 Aug. We got to watch many races with Mazda MX-5s, Mustangs, Corvettes, & the Grand Finale: Michelin GT Challenge on Sunday. We were to able ride in exotic cars on the track, go off roading in a 750 HP Ford Raptor, and meet with race car drivers and Pit crews. All in all, it was great fun & an awesome experience. ~ Roy Schende, Master of Ceremonies

***Top left:** Roy Jr. sitting in Race Car in Pit lane*

***Middle:** Roy Sr. with the "Michelin Man"*

***Bottom left:** Nick speaking with Race Car Driver filmed by Media*

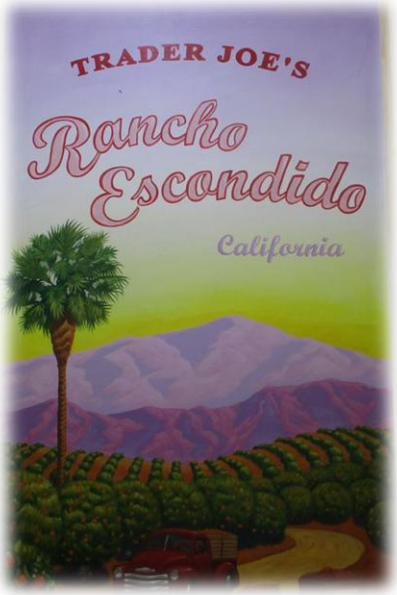
***Bottom right:** Roy Jr's Audi R8 in Front of VIP Stands*



VA State Trustee, Joe Scafetta III, pilots a car ferry from Cape May, New Jersey, to Lewes, Delaware, for a few minutes on Thursday, August 7, 2025

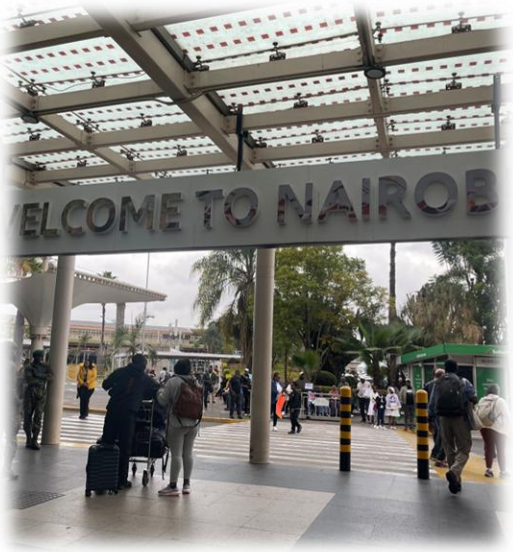
President Dawn and her stepmother, Rose, visiting from Texas, attending the Rod Stewart concert

Trustees Donna & Ray Stoll, along with Ray's brother Clifford, (right) during their summer visit to Berkeley, CA. ~ Below: Always fun to visit local Trader Joe's, this one is just outside San Diego. Lunching right on Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco where you can see Alcatraz. Their very special luncheon featured mussels served on a hot iron skillet steamed with a white wine, that sizzled and produced a cumulus cloud of delicious aroma!



Ellie (Trustee) and Dennis (Guard) Lillo took a ten-day safari trip to Kenya.

"It was amazing to see animals living in their natural habitats. We were lucky to see all of the big five, elephants, lions, leopards, rhinos and Cape buffalo as well as the start of the great migration of wildebeasts and zebras. We also took a hot air ballon ride, which allowed us to see the great expanse of the African plains. It was an experience of a lifetime that we will never forget!"



NANYUKI
YOU ARE AT THE
EQUATOR
0.0

MARA SERENA SAFARI LODGE
LATITUDE: 1°24'.09 Seconds South of Equator
LONGITUDE: 35°01'.34 Seconds East of Greenwich
ALTITUDE: 5,321 Ft. 1625 Mts
KENYA - East Africa

Butternut Squash Stuffed Shells With Sage Browned Butter Sauce

These butternut squash stuffed shells with a sage browned butter sauce are elegant and delicious, and perfect to make for holiday company. It is a great Fall dish too!

Ingredients:

1 large butternut squash
1-2 tablespoons olive oil
1 (12 ounce) package jumbo pasta shells, about 20-24 shells
2 cups whole milk ricotta cheese, drained
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 garlic cloves, finely minced
1/2 cup packed fresh spinach, chopped after measuring
1 large egg
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
Zest and juice of 1/2 lemon
1/2 cup unsalted butter (1 stick)
8 fresh sage leaves

Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Peel the butternut squash, remove any seeds, and chop the flesh into cubes. Toss the cubed squash in 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil and roast in the oven for 15-20 minutes until the squash is fork tender. Scrape the squash into a bowl and mash with a fork until smooth. Let the squash cool to warm room temperature before mixing into the ricotta cheese. Reduce the oven temperature to 400°F. Drain the ricotta cheese in a strainer that is lined with paper towels or a clean kitchen towel over a bowl to catch any drainage.

Cooking Instructions:

Cook the jumbo shells according to package directions and drain.

In a medium bowl, combine the cooked squash, drained ricotta cheese, Parmesan cheese, minced garlic, chopped spinach, egg, salt, pepper and fresh lemon zest. Stir well. Stuff the cooked pasta shells with the squash/ricotta mixture and place them in a lightly greased 9x13 baking pan and loosely cover with aluminum foil. Bake the shells for 18-20 minutes until they are hot all the way through.

Sage Browned Butter:

While the shells are baking, prepare the brown butter sauce by melting the butter in a saucepan or skillet over medium-low heat until the butter is golden brown, about 10-12 minutes. Keep stirring and watch this carefully as the butter can go from brown to burned in a short time. Add the sage leaves and cook until the leaves are slightly crisp. The butter should be hot and bubbly when adding the leaves so that the sage cooks quickly. Remove the pan from the heat and squeeze in the juice of 1/2 lemon.

Final step: Remove the shells from the oven and drizzle the sauce over the cooked shells and top with additional grated Parmesan. Turn on the broiler and place the shells under the broiler for just a few minutes to crisp up the tops. Serve the shells with 1-2 crisp sage leaves on top if desired.

Some Notes:

You can use "frozen" spinach, one package, but be sure to completely defrost and squeeze out any water before adding to your ricotta mixture. Also, if you want to make this recipe out of the Fall season and butternut squashes are not available, you can find the squash in your freezer section. It is already peeled and cut, so you just have to cook it or microwave it, according package directions.

Some Personal Notes:

This version of "stuffed shells" is not one that I grew up on in my Italian family. My mother and grandmothers taught me the basic recipe for ricotta filling that can be used in lasagna, stuffed shells, manicotti, etc. All good, delicious and certainly a crowd pleaser.

I came upon this recipe a few years ago when I wanted to try something different during the Fall months. I have made it many times since after requests from family and friends. It does not contain meat, but in my opinion, adding meat (ground beef, sausage, etc.) would spoil the sweetness that comes through from the butternut squash. I was also not used to making these big Italian dishes without a pomodoro sauce. So, two big differences here – a sweeter tasting filling and a lighter buttery sauce are present in this dish.

I hope that you try making this for company or your family for a crisp Fall evening dinner. I think it will surprise you! ~ CS

ORDER SONS & DAUGHTERS OF ITALY IN AMERICA
ITALIAN HERITAGE LODGE #2517
2025-2026 OFFICERS

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703-241-7775	**jhn.dovel@gmail.com**	

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Mistress of Ceremonies: **Sandy Schender**

Guard: **Dennis Lillo**

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Chair: **Dawn Falsinotti**
Vice Chair: **Joseph Scafetta Jr.**

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Lodge Members Serving on the Grand Council of Virginia:

Joseph Scafetta Jr., Former State President and Trustee
Steven Kramer, Recording Secretary
Coletta Sciscilo, Trustee
Joseph Scafetta III, Trustee

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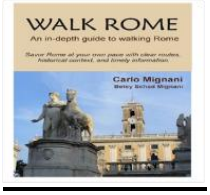

CARLO AND BETSY MIGNANI have written a valuable guide to assist tourists who want to explore the Eternal City on their own with historical context and timely information. Available on Amazon, search "Walk Rome Mignani."
www.walk-rome.com

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