

Ambassador



National Italian American Foundation

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Proud of his Italian immigrant roots, Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito tries to do justice to their lasting legacy in America... one Constitutional decision at a time.

Cover photograph by Kenneth Rictor Photography — www.kennethrictor.com

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From The NIAF Chairman

With NIAF's "Gala Season" already in full tilt, I want to get straight to the point. This year, as you probably know, the Foundation celebrates its 40th Anniversary—four remarkable decades of fulfilling our important mission to preserve the Italian American heritage and culture, and to promote and inspire a positive image and legacy of Italian Americans.

For that, and for many other reasons, I promise you, this year's Anniversary Gala, October 16-18, will be unlike any NIAF Gala before it. This will be an unforgettable celebration where you and your family can proudly, with thousands of new and old friends, celebrate together your Italian heritage.

NIAF has moved the celebration to a new and outstanding venue at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park hotel, in downtown Washington, D.C. Not only does the hotel offer our Gala guests many more services than in past years, its classy ballroom and huge exhibition hall are more accommodating to the Gala's events.

Among the weekend's highlights are a better-than-ever Friday night show, "Joe Piscopo and Friends Celebrate Frank Sinatra's 100th Birthday," featuring *Il Volo* and other special guests crooning tunes from the Sinatra Songbook! Expo Italiana, on Saturday, showcasing Italian products, foods and beverages, plus bocce matches, music and performances, will be Washington's biggest Italian festival. The popular Wine Tasting will again offer some of Italy's finest. On Saturday evening, the Gala receptions and 40th Anniversary Awards Dinner are the centerpiece, followed by the partying at the NIAF After Hours Celebration.

But there's more to the celebration of NIAF's 40th Anniversary than one extraordinary weekend in October. While we have a lot

to be proud of, the 40th Anniversary gives us an opportunity to reflect on our mission and goals, and how they have evolved.

Forty years ago, NIAF was founded to provide a voice for Italian Americans in the Nation's Capital, to defend Italian Americans from bias and discrimination, and to protect the Italian American image.

While our advocacy role in Washington, D.C., has never been more powerful, and has expanded in building of commercial, cultural and strategic relationships between the United States and Italy, NIAF is much less involved with discrimination and stereotyping issues today. That's not because there aren't any, but because there's less of a need. You see, Italian Americans, in general, through their hard work, determination, and education, over generations, have climbed up from the lower economic strata, and from the hardships our immigrant forefathers endured, to become respected leaders in professions and communities throughout the United States.

For us to find respect, we had to move beyond being defensive about being disrespected, and move forward to making a positive difference. So, instead of battling defamation, today NIAF has evolved into being a thought leader on matters important to Italian Americans and to all ethnic groups who have an opportunity to learn from the Italian American experience.

And, that's why, in this wonderful 40th Anniversary year, I think the Foundation has a bright and relevant future for Italian Americans—and for all Americans.

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NIAF Chairman

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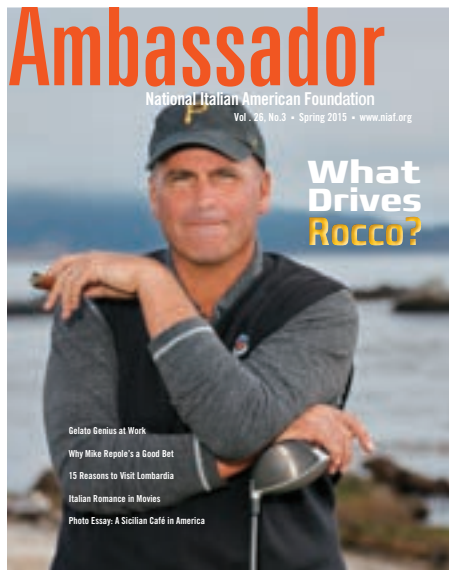
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Reader Feedback



Scenes From A Sicilian Café

Paul Gary Goldberg (“The Sicilian Café in America,” Spring 2015 issue) is a great writer. He is an even greater

photographer...from the pinching of the thumb and index finger to picking-up the demitasse cup (you gotta curl and keep the other finger away) to old Frankie leaning-resting, to Maria’s beautiful haun-

ting stare. And that great Dominic and Eliana shot. Hats off to the Jewish kid from the Bronx. He’s got a sharp pen and an even sharper eye for images.

— Mario Fumarola
Macungie, Pa.

Author of the Utica (N.Y.) trilogy “Wasn’t It Only Yesterday,” “Immigrants All!!!” and “Last of the First”

Mario Cuomo’s Legacy

I have just completed reading your article “Mario Cuomo’s Legacy” (Spring 2015 issue). I empathized with your article concerning your disappointment with Mr. Cuomo’s decision not to run for the president of the United States. I sense that his refusal was because he understood that by running some part of his life would be brought up and reshaped to his opposition’s advantage.

That realization was a risk he did not choose to take. It would have resulted in public discourse and misuse, and would support the stereotypical image that Italians have been given. He did not want to perpetuate that image. So, our country lost a person of integrity who would have made a wonderful president and the Italian American community lost an opportunity to make a huge stride forward.

Thanks you for the effort that NIAF is making in improving the image of Italian Americans.

— Alfred Morena Jr.
Bow, N.H.



More On Milano

Concerning the story “15 Reasons to Visit Lombardia in 2015” (Spring 2015 issue), I lived in Milano in the early 1960s. It’s a great place to live. Milano is full of historical facts and places that the story missed. Among them, the Milano Cathedral has more than 3,500 statues outside, and it took more than 400 years to construct, renovate and finish the cathedral.... incredible! Every 100 years, the front doors of the gold altar at Milan’s Basilica di Sant’Ambrogio were opened to the general parishioners. The Brera Galleria contains the world’s largest collection of pre-1200-A.D. Madonnas, painted not on canvas but on slats of wood, main colors being black, gold and red. And in a city called Arona, on one end of Lago di Maggiore, is a gigantic statue of San Carlo (Borromeo) extending his hand over the lake. Created from battered copper plates and completed in 1624, it was the tallest statue in the world pre-dating the larger Statue of Liberty by 274 years. What a feat! And, at the Basilica di Santa Croce in Florence, I saw the statue (Pio Fedi’s statue to Giovanni Battista Niccolini) with spikes on its head ...created 40 years or so before Bartholdi’s Statue of Liberty.... I could go on and on.

— Thomas F. Cacciola
Englewood Cliffs, N.J.

Tell Us What You Think!

Letters to the Editor may be e-mailed to ambassador@niaf.org or mailed to Letters to the Editor, Ambassador Magazine, 1860 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. Include your full name and address.

Letters may be published and edited for length and clarity.

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mixed
MUSHROOM PIZZA

AUTUMN SALAD with SHIITAKE DRESSING





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per



MILANO 2015

The Bright Future for NIAF Programs

By Gabriella Mileti
NIAF Director of Programs

Since our founding 40 years ago, the National Italian American Foundation has been dedicated to the future of the Italian American community. Through our robust scholarship program, we have put our youth first.

In the beginning, the Foundation's scholarship program awarded four scholarships of \$250 each. But thanks to the generous people of the Italian American community, today, we administer close to 70 individual scholarships annually, ranging in value from \$2,500 to \$12,000, to Italian American students studying a wide variety of subjects, from the Italian language, the arts and music, to medicine, engineering, law and business.



NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso and NIAF President John M. Viola cutting the ribbon on the terraces of the Duomo.

In addition, we ensure the promotion and teaching of our culture through our grant program. In fact, last year we awarded the University of Maryland with a \$500,000 grant for its project entitled "Between Washington and Ancient Rome: The NIAF Pellegrini Program on Roman Antiquity and Its Legacy in America."

This year, as we commemorate our 40th anniversary, we have announced two new, dynamic, educational programs—one in the north of

Italy and one in the south of Italy.

Each year, NIAF celebrates an Italian Region of Honor. During their annual "Mission to Italy," NIAF leaders travel to the region, and we make every effort to leave a positive footprint. In 2015, NIAF's Region of Honor is Lombardia. So, this year, through a \$100,000 NIAF Emanuele and Emilia Inglese Memorial Grant, we were able to support the "Save the Saint" restoration project of the statue of the first American Saint, Frances Xavier Cabrini, with the International Patrons of Duomo di Milano. Not only is Madre Cabrini dear to the hearts of all Italian Americans, but at the heart of this project is the fact that, each year, Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano gives people under the age of 35 the opportunity to undertake training programs of the highest quality. For 2015, Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo is dedicating training programs for 58 young artisans, in no small part thanks to NIAF's support.

Our footprint in Lombardia went even deeper when we partnered with one of the world's most prestigious institutions for training professionals in the performing arts—Accademia Teatro alla Scala and Politecnico di Milano Graduate School of Business (MIP), an internationally recognized management school. Through this partnership, a full-tuition scholarship of €13,500 (approximately \$14,500) will be awarded to an Italian American graduate student seeking a Master in Performing Arts Management in Milan, Italy.

The scope of this study is to prepare professionals who combine deep cultural and artistic capabilities with solid financial and managerial skills, and are able to assume responsibilities in the field of performing arts and



Gabriella Mileti

NIAF Leadership and representatives of the Region of Lombardia, the U.S. Consulate in Milan and the International Patrons of the Duomo, on the terraces of the Duomo in Milan, commemorating the \$100,000 donation to restore the Madre Cabrini statue.

develop its rich economic and social potentials. With the support of a world-class teaching staff that includes some 100 specialists in theatre and management working with the pre-eminent performing arts institutions in Italy and abroad (such as Opera Europa, Metropolitan Opera House, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, English National Opera, Opéra de Rennes, Berliner Philharmoniker, Hong Kong Arts Festival, DeVos Institute, and WolfBrown), students will gain in-depth knowledge of managerial methods applicable to different areas of the world.

Additionally, an integral part of the program is a three-to-six month internship at performing arts ➤



Paola Sartorio

Dr. John P. Rosa, co-chair of the NIAF education and grants committee; NIAF International Relations Liaison Carlo Piccolo; NIAF Board Member Charles Turano; NIAF Director of Programs Gabriella Mileti; and NIAF President John M. Viola; at the anti-mafia demonstration honoring Judges Falcone and Borsellino and all victims of the mafia in Palermo.

institutions in Italy or abroad, providing students with invaluable hands-on professional experience. For centuries, Italians have been at the forefront of the arts and we are honored that we can bring this lifetime opportunity to a young, talented Italian American student.

From the north, NIAF President John M. Viola led a delegation of the Foundation's Board leadership south to Palermo, Italy, on May 23, a sacred day not only for the city of Palermo, but for Italians worldwide. It marks



Courtesy of the Fondazione Falcone

The NIAF delegation is joined by members of the U.S.-Italy Fulbright Commission Board, Professor Maria Falcone (fourth from right, back row), and students from Columbus Heights Educational Campus of Washington, D.C., at the Fondazione Giovanni e Francesca Falcone in Palermo, Italy.

the anniversary of the assassinations of anti-mafia Judge Giovanni Falcone, his wife, Judge Francesca Morvillo, and their three-man escort.

This year's commemoration ceremony was especially notable for NIAF because on live TV, in the infamous "Aula Bunker" at the Ucciardone Jail, the very location where Judge Falcone carried out the famous "Maxi Trial," and with the president of the Italian Republic and other dignitaries in attendance, Viola introduced our new partnership with the U.S.-Italy Fulbright Commission and the Fondazione Giovanni e Francesca Falcone.

Through this three-year commitment, scholarships will be available to university graduate students, one from America and one from Sicily, to conduct research in criminology, to promote the value of the rule of law and to endorse anti-mafia culture at the Fondazione Giovanni e Francesca Falcone in Palermo. What makes this program so unique is that this is the only program in the U.S.-Italy Fulbright Commission that provides

study for both an American and an Italian student.

This agreement not only honors the sacred memory of the Judges Giovanni and Francesca Falcone, but also creates a practical opportunity for our community to join forces with Italy to address a problem that is international in scope. This is an opportunity to give back to Italy, our ancestral homeland.

After 40 years, it's important to look inwards and make sure that the work we are doing and the opportunities we're providing young Italian Americans are not only true to the spirit of community that NIAF was founded upon, but that they're also pertinent modern approaches that will positively impact young lives with training, mentorship and real work experience, both here and in Italy.

Every dollar raised at NIAF is an investment by thousands of Italian Americans in ensuring that our community is always growing new and bright talents, prepared for the challenges of the world ahead. ▲

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Photo Fabio Sguazzin, Venezia, Italia

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Finding Italy in Philadelphia

NIAF ON LOCATION searches for Italy's influences in America's cities and towns! Whether it's restaurants, festivals, markets or museums, NIAF members lead you to special places that make them feel a little more Italian in their own hometowns. For this issue, we asked NIAF Chairman of the Board Joseph V. Del Raso for insider information for finding Italy in Philadelphia.

What is the Italian part of your city?

South Philadelphia is our Little Italy, sometimes referred to as Bella Vista. Neatly maintained row homes with some ornate front doors and facades dominate the neighborhood's Italian market, known to longtime residents as "9th Street." It represents the commercial center of activity, very much like Arthur Avenue in the Bronx.

What are your favorite Italian restaurants in your city and why?

Our all-time family favorite is La Famiglia. The Sena family set a new standard for Italian cuisine in Philadelphia when they opened in Old City in the 1970s. One of my new favorites for café dining is the Grand Café L'Aquila. It was opened after the last earthquake by one of the partners who operated a café in the devastated city that this café derives its name from.

Are there any "back in time" authentic Italian-neighborhood restaurants you love?

The old Italian restaurants of my youth are gone and many of these that exist are not owned generationally. A favorite local spot, especially after an event at the South Philadelphia sports facilities, is Villa di Roma on 9th Street.

When you need a dose of Italian culture, where do you go?

Italian culture lives in Philadelphia's many cultural venues. The Academy of Music, its architecture inspired by La Scala, is the home of the Opera Company. The Kimmel Center is our new concert hall and we have had some



Olivier Le Queinec

Giuseppe Sena, owner of La Famiglia Ristorante, and NIAF Chairman Joe Del Raso at the Old City Philadelphia restaurant founded by Giuseppe's father, Carlo Sena, in 1976. Giuseppe and Joe have known each other for more than 40 years.



great Italian American entertainment there performed by our beloved Philly Pop. Finally, our world-class art museums have some great Italian masterpieces and special shows.

If our readers needed to cook their own authentic Italian meal, where could they get those hard to find ingredients?

Ingredients for a good Italian meal can be found in the remaining Italian markets on 9th Street, but the suburbs also have some great stores—Carlino's in Ardmore and West Chester is no. 1 in my book.

How about Italian fashion?

Italian fashion is an important feature of our top retailers and the nationally regarded King of Prussia Mall has several Italian retail specialty shops. We also have some great Italian custom tailors. My favorite, and one of the best, is Gabe D'Annunzio in Newton Square. He is the custom tailor for Villanova basketball coach Jay Wright and is my personal favorite, along with fellow NIAF Board members Gabe Battista who introduced us.

What's the most Italian day of the year in your community?

Philadelphia does not have "a day" but an entire month thanks to the leadership of our Italian Consul General Andrea Canepari. We now designate October as "Ciao Italia" and we celebrate a different theme every day of the month.

Who has the best morning espresso?

I prefer cappuccino in the morning which I make at home, but the best coffee bar is Grand Café L'Aquila.

Is there a special monument, museum, or cultural center based on Italian or Italian American culture?

The most prominent monument is at the Christopher Columbus Memorial at Penn's Landing, located at the intersection of Columbus Boulevard and Dock Street. I have some concerns that the political correctness police may someday try to remove it, but I am confident our Philly Proud Italian Americans will stand their ground. ▲

By Elissa Abatemarco Ruffino and Jonathan Stern

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Founded in Sicily in 2006, Ortigia creates soaps, scents, creams, candles and lotions using natural ingredients indigenous to Italy's tropical island. Master perfumer Lorenzo Villoresi distills the flowers of Sicily to create perfumes (shown from top left clockwise: Sandalo, Coral Shell, Ambra Nera and Orange Blossom). Designed by founder Sue Townsend, the perfumes' colorful packaging evokes exotic Sicilian imagery. Price: \$105. www.ortigiasicilia.com



Espresso Chic

Founded six years ago by Silvia Arienti and Giovanni Colombo, the Italian design firm AR & CO Baci Milano has been successful thanks to its emphasis on unique and colorful style. These elegant porcelain and silicone coffee cups and sleeves from the collection Chic & Fluo are perfect for any season and available in vibrant colors. Price: \$14.90 for two cups. www.bacimilano.it and www.shop.mohd.it

Italian to a Tee!

Fourth-generation Italian American Austin Bartlett shares his pride of Italian culture and modern fashion through his online clothing store Riviva (Italian for revive). The company offers apparel for men and women that celebrates heritage and donates a portion of the proceeds to Fondazione con il Sud, a not-for-profit group that works to improve social and economic issues in southern Italy. Price: T-shirts begin at \$25. www.rivivaclotthing.com



Can't Hold a Candle to These

Visionary artist Piero Fornasetti transformed the decorative arts scene of the 20th century. His graphic illustrations have been adapted to furniture, fashion, book covers and, now, a home-fragrance collection. This decorative candle, called L'Ape (The Bee), includes the line's signature Otto scent: a combination of thyme, lavender, cedarwood and incense, among other scents. Price: \$175. www.amazon.com

What's Pasta is Prologue

Based in Sonoma, Calif., Artisanal Pasta Tools manufactures handcrafted specialty wooden pasta-making utensils and tools. Owner Terri Mirri does all the woodwork himself to create each pasta tool without using a template, giving each piece a unique quality. The cavarola board is a Pugliese tradition that presses a decorative pattern onto pasta sheets. It's available in three woods—walnut, cherry and beech. Price: \$69. www.artisanalpastatools.com



Sparkles Like Crystal

The asymmetrical facets of Florentine designer Mario Luca Giusti's Milly tumblers give the gemstone sparkle of rock crystal. However, these are crafted from high-quality acrylic and will not shatter. His synthetic tableware designs are classical yet modern. The Milly, shown, also comes in royal blue, red, turquoise, clear and amber. Cost: \$25. www.mariolucagiusti.com



Do you know of a wonderful new product or design made in Italy or of interest to Italian Americans? Tell Bottega NIAF editor Elissa Ruffino at Elissa@niaf.org



Biking Bravura

ZBenelli has been manufacturing Italian bicycles for more than a century and has recently introduced in the United States its Classica, an electric bicycle (e-bike). Inspired by the 1920s hybrid, the Classica e-bike has leather seats and hand grips and features pedal assist with a top speed of 20 mph and a range up to 40 miles. A light-weight lithium battery pack is concealed in the frames' front. Cost: \$2,100. www.benellibikesusa.com



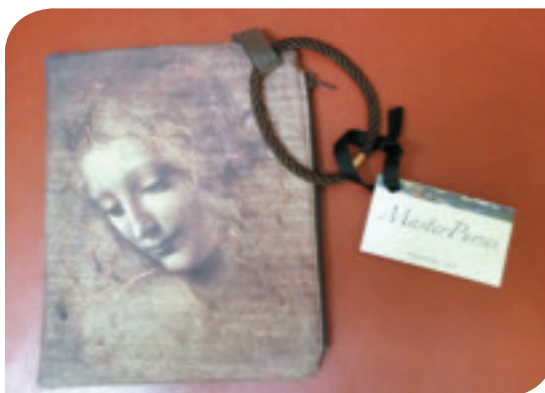
Unisex Accessory

Wear your Italian pride on your sleeve—or close to it—with this “Flag Italy” bracelet by accessory brand San Torpe. The Italian designer and creative director, Dimitris Zoz, designed the handmade, stylish and versatile rope-knot bracelet, featuring a silver finished metal clasp. Price: \$24. www.santorpe.com



Snake Charmer

Bulgari takes the art of jewelry making to another level with its Serpenti Secret Watches collection. Drawing inspiration from the power of the serpent, the double spiral bracelet is set with cut diamonds and corals, and the quartz-movement watch is enclosed in a 40-millimeter, 18-ct pink gold case. Price: \$310,000. www.bulgari.com



Fine Art Everyday

MasterPurses, the eye-catching accessory created by Joann Pitelli, reflects a masterpiece of art from Da Vinci, Botticelli and Raphael, to name a few. Each piece is digitally reproduced on silk and applied to leather, faux leather, velvet or brocade with silk cording wristlet handles, colorful linings and subtle jewel highlights. Cost: \$60-\$85 depending on size, fabric and embellishments. www.masterpurses.com.



Back to the Future Clock

Chic Italian design and elegance are the hallmark of Lorenz timepieces. Beginning in 1934, its founder Tullio Bolletta was on a quest to create sophisticated designs. Originally released in 1960, the Lorenz Static table clock remains distinctive, creating an impression that the clock is suspended. Available in three colors: red, black and brushed silver. Price: \$620. www.ameico.com and www.lorenz.it



Lightness of Bedding

The Italian manufacturer Presotto specializes in cutting-edge home furnishings. Eco-sustainability, innovation and creativity have distinguished the Presotto brand since 1948. The Wing Bed features a leather headboard and two aged-oak nightstands which are mounted to the wall and supported by a clear-acrylic base. The effect is a minimalistic bed that appears to hover above the floor. Price: \$13,130. www.presotto.com



Rising Star

Francesca Capaldi does not know a lot about unrequited love.

"There have been boys on social media that have asked me to be their girlfriend, but I don't know who any of them are," says the 11-year-old actress, who stars on the Disney Channel's "Dog With a Blog."

A generation of "Peanuts" fans, however, know that Charlie Brown has always pined for The Little Red Haired Girl, whom Capaldi plays in "The Peanuts Movie." The 3D computer animated film opens on November 6.

A native of California, Capaldi, whose first paid acting job was at 13 months old, when she appeared with her mother, Gina Capaldi, in two "Sesame Beginning" DVDs, embraced

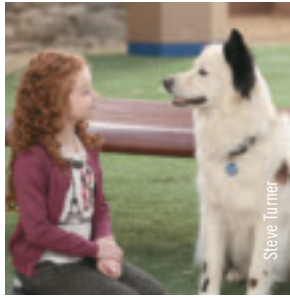
the chance to record her first movie voice-over.

"I thought she should have a sweet and kind voice so it was fun to create that," says Capaldi, whose grandparents hail from the Abruzzo and Molise regions of Italy and whose father speaks fluent Italian.

More fun than working with Mick, her four-legged Disney co-star?

"Recording in the studio is easier," she says. "There are many factors involved when you're filming a live show. Even though he's super well-trained, Mick is still a real dog."

Good grief! What would Snoopy say?
— Douglas Gladstone



Francesca Capaldi stars with "Mick" in the Disney Channel's "Dog With A Blog"

Steve Turner



His Bread and Butter

If you need to know about kneading, Father Dominic Garramone is the person with the answers. Residing at St. Bede Abbey in Peru, Ill., Garramone answered the call to religious life (monastery in 1983; ordained a Benedictine priest in 1992) and to the kitchen. His skills as a baker came from his mom's kitchen, the library, and watching PBS.

Also known as "The Bread Monk" and "The Pizza Priest," the self-taught baker, with Italian ancestry from the Basilicata region, has baked his share of Italian bread. "I had to learn to make pumpernickel, stollen and brioche, and not just garlic bread!" says Garramone, about the multi-ethnic palates of the abbey residents. Through social-media networking, he stays in contact with fellow "Breadheads," his term of endearment for flour foodies.

Garramone has authored six cookbooks about baking. In 2011, his first children's book, titled "Brother Jerome and the Angels in the Bakery," won two awards—The Christopher Award for children's books (ages 8-10), and the Catholic Press Association's first-place award for children's books. He also hosted "Breaking Bread with Father Dominic," a cooking show on PBS from 1999-2011.

Garramone believes that once a person learns how to work with yeast and knead dough, successful baking will follow. "Don't worry, it's bread, it's going to forgive you!" he says. Visit his website at www.breadmonk.com.

— Robert Bartus Jr.



Saint Bede Abbey and Academy

Ambassador's Paesani department chronicles in short form the lives of Italian Americans, Italians and others doing extraordinary things of interest to Italian Americans. Know someone who should be profiled in Paesani? Send suggestions to paesani@niaf.org.

NIAF's



Jolie Dickson



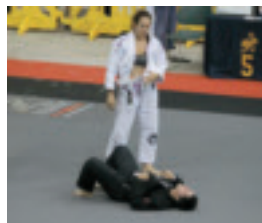
The Best of Italia

She Means Business

For Jennifer Zanotti Ori, applying makeup to brides, talking economics with entrepreneurs and practicing leg locks on sparring partners are all in a hectic week’s work.

By day, Ori runs Jen Z’s Beauty Services in suburban Chicago. Now in its 8th year, the salon offers traditional services such as manicures as well as holistic services and guided meditation.

In 2013, Ori’s interest in health and wellness led her in an unlikely direction. She signed up for Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu classes. Currently a four-stripe white belt, she already has competed in seven tournaments and medaled in six of them. Ori believes the training regimen has helped her succeed in the beauty business, citing an increased appreciation for concepts like “discipline, humility and work ethic.”



Those same qualities have helped her thrive in yet another role. In 2014, she became president of the Chamber of Commerce in Highwood, Ill. Her responsibilities include coordinating annual events, hosting mixers, assisting local schools and speaking with business groups. “I wanted to do more than build my own business,” she says. “I wanted to support the growth of my community as a whole.”

Despite everything on Ori’s schedule, she has traveled to Italy four times and is planning return trips. “It’s very important to me to know our history and embrace my culture,” she says. Website: www.JenZsBeautyServicesInc.com

— Greg Forbes Siegman

Working Artisans

During her junior year of college, Antonia (Toni) Galli Sterling, traveled to Florence, Italy, to study at Gonzaga University. That year changed and enriched the trajectory of her life.

Fast forward from the early ‘80s to her fluid career in marketing. Sterling found a void when her only son, Nick, left for college. “I felt I had to do something unique to leave a legacy that would honor my love of heritage and be of service,” says Sterling. So she created The Best of Italia (www.TheBestofItalia.com), purchasing elegant, handmade products from master Italian artisans to preserve, promote and protect their legendary craftsmanship.

The Best of Italia combines Sterling’s love for Italy, art, history, philanthropy and her deep concern for the serious socio-economic issues facing Italians.

The online boutique launched in October 2014 with just two artisans— one a leather master in Rome, and the other a master of Firenze’s finest silver and goldsmiths. These artisans work in small studios. Through this project, six Italians have been employed.

Items are purchased at retail, not wholesale, to increase profits for the artisans, allowing them to hire apprentices so trade secrets will not perish. Most of the proceeds are donated to philanthropies in the United States that support children, among them, Free The Children, Rotary International, and St. Jude’s Children Research Hospital.

— Elissa Ruffino



The Best of Italia

Persons of Interest



Italian Lessons

Matthew Drucker lives and breathes Italian in every sense of the word, says his wife Teresa Intranuovo Drucker. For the last 14 years, he has taught Italian at Comsewogue High School in Long Island, N.Y., where he has helped boost the school's Italian program from four to 14 classes.

His love for teaching the Italian language extends beyond the classroom, having taken his students on several successful trips to Italy to encourage them to use their language skills with purpose and to share the land and culture he loves.

Drucker has also provided scholarships to a few students who have demonstrated excellence in their Italian studies and to those who will continue to study Italian as they go forth into higher education.

And many of his students have gone on to study in Italy as a result of his influence.

Meanwhile, Drucker also tutors adults and is co-founder of Italian Language Littles, a program that brings Italian to the youngest population, teaching them that the strongest connection to a culture is knowing its language. In his spare time, he blogs about his teaching adventures, has published a children's book titled "Do you Want to Make a Pizza?" and plans a fabulous Italian night with his high school students every year. Check out Matthew's blog at <http://sigdrucker.BlogSpot.com/>.

— Alex Benedetto



Tom Turk

Brides on a Budget

Ask Donna Vaccarezza what inspired a nurse therapist to open Fairytale Brides on a Shoestring Boutique in Rockville, Md., and she'll tell you that after visiting another nonprofit bridal shop she felt she could do it better. After all, she'd learned a thing or two about entrepreneurship growing up on Long Island working carnivals for her father's amusement company.

With the help of her husband, Dr. Stephen Vaccarezza, she found a high-visibility strip-mall location, opened the shop long hours, and promoted it on social media. In the two years since, Vaccarezza has matched more than 100 "brides on a budget" with bridal gowns for a fraction of the big-salon cost.

"People understand that there's no reason why they can't breathe new life into a gown," says Vaccarezza, 59, explaining most gowns are donated from boutiques or brides, brand new or worn once. Her deep-discounted inventory has included labels like Vera Wang, Maggie Sottero and Paloma Blanca.

In July, Vaccarezza and her 25 volunteers participated in Brides Across America, a biannual nationwide drive to give free gowns to military brides. She'd like to expand Fairytale Brides to help more military brides, but needs cash donations to do that since all proceeds, after expenses, go to other local charities. "We are proud," says Vaccarezza, a second-generation Sicilian American and mother of two, "to have created a full circle of giving!" Visit: www.fairytalebrides.org.

— Don Oldenburg



Tom Turk

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Pasta

Rules Year Around



Stepanek Photography

Spinach pasta dough ready to roll

By Mary Ann Esposito

Using the Old Noodle When Making Fresh Noodles!

There is nothing worse than being served a plate of cold pasta. An old saying goes: “Cooked pasta waits for no one.” Amen to that! I keep that quote on my refrigerator door!

October is traditionally National Pasta Month, but pasta is celebrated on dinner tables every day of the year! So when it is time to “butta la pasta” (cook the pasta), it is worth remembering a few rules.

First, choose good imported pasta made with 100 percent semolina flour. This type of pasta is known as pasta *secca*, dried pasta, and most of the hundreds of shapes with endearing names like *farfalle* (butterflies) and *gemelli* (twins) come from southern Italy.

Pasta *fresca*, or fresh pasta, is a hallmark of more northern regions like Emilia Romagna. It’s usually made with unbleached flour, eggs and salt, although there are regional variations on this, too. Some regions add just egg whites, some add more yolks than whole eggs, some add just water, and others add white wine.

Pasta needs to be cooked in plenty of rapidly boiling and salted water. It needs water to expand and cook, and it needs salt for flavor. Overcooking pasta is easy to do. In Italy, it is cooked *al dente*, much firmer than here at home. So how do you know when it is just right? Break a piece in half and if any flour is visible, that means the pasta is not fully cooked.

Believe it or not, there are ways to make sure that the pasta about to be served is piping hot when placed in front of someone. One trick that I use is to heat individual pasta bowls in the microwave or your oven while the pasta is being sauced. The other trick is to drain the cooked pasta into a colander set in the sink over a large serving platter; the boiling water will heat the platter.

The best way to sauce pasta is in the saucepan in which the sauce was made. That way the individual pasta pieces are evenly coated, not drowned in sauce. Italians never serve it with a big glob of sauce sitting on top of naked pasta.

Choose the right sauce for the right pasta. Smooth sauces tend to do best with spaghetti, linguine and fettucine, while chunky sauces are best on short cuts of pasta like fusilli and rigatoni. And don’t forget to add some of the pasta cooking water (about a ladleful) to your sauce; the starch in the water will help the sauce to adhere to the pasta.

Twirling pasta on a soup spoon is not done in Italy. Winding it around a fork is. And long pasta (spaghetti, fettucine and vermicelli) is never cut with a knife unless it is a lasagne or some other type of filled pasta.

Seafood-based pasta dishes are rarely if ever served with grated cheese to sprinkle on top. If you have ever been to Italy and asked for cheese to go with your clams and spaghetti, you know what I mean. You will get a blank stare from the waiter!



Mary Ann Esposito's latest cookbook, “Ciao Italia Family Classics,” is available in bookstores and online at Amazon.com. And visit Mary Ann’s online store on her website at www.ciaoitalia.com/products



John Hession/Courtesy of Mary Ann Esposito

Lasagne Verdi alla Bolognese

A pound of pasta serves eight... not two. We are all guilty of large portions. We can't help it because we love it so much. We tend to forget that, in Italy, pasta is a first course, not THE course, so the portion sizes are smaller.

One way around eating too much pasta is to load it up with lots of vegetables or fish so that the ratio of veggies or fish is greater than the amount of pasta. Try these tricks the next time you cook pasta.

Meanwhile, here's a recipe for one of those timeless classic pasta dishes every cook should know how to prepare — Lasagne Verdi alla Bolognese.

Unfortunately, it comes in many guises, most of them poor shadows of the original though made by well-meaning chefs. So when I wanted to make it as it should be made, I went to Bologna and met with Giovanni Tamburini, the owner of Tamburini, that well-known, venerable food emporium that stocks the prized ingredients and prepared foods of the region known as Emilia Romagna.

Many consider this region the gastronomic center of Italy. Proudly made here is everything from prosciutto di Parma hanging from old iron meat hooks in the ceiling, and display after display of local *salames*, *felsino* sausage, mortadella, culatello and coppa, to the signature fresh pastas, including tortelli, taglierini, tagliatelle, cappelletti, tortelloni and lasagna, to the king of cheeses, Parmigiano Reggiano. I did not know where to look first, and my

mouth was watering.

Freshly made lasagne has a lightness that commercially prepared ones could never match. That's because the pasta is made with flour and eggs, rolled very thin, and the lasagne sheets sandwiched together with hardly noticeable amounts of sauce between each layer. There is no heavy tasting version made with thick slices of mozzarella or dense ricotta cheese between the layers as we find here.

Making this lasagne is a labor of love but well worth the time for a true and delicious payoff. Both the béchamel and the ragu sauces can be made several days ahead and refrigerated. Re-heat them slowly when ready to assemble the lasagna. And if the béchamel sauce is too thick, thin it down with a little milk.

Spinach-flavored pasta is an integral part of making a true lasagne verdi alla Bolognese. Make the dough in a food processor instead of by hand because the spinach blends in more easily with the eggs, producing a dazzling brilliant green color.

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Lasagne Verdi alla Bolognese

Pasta Verde Spinach Pasta

Makes about 1 pound

Ingredients

- 10 ounces fresh spinach, stemmed and well rinsed
- 2 large eggs
- 3 to 3½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour

Directions

- Place the spinach in a pot without any additional water. Cover and wilt the leaves down. This will take just a few minutes. As soon as they are wilted, drain in a colander and, when cool enough to handle, squeeze very dry. It is important to get out all the excess water otherwise too much flour will be used.
- Place cup of the squeezed spinach in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Reserve any remaining spinach for another use.
- Add the eggs and pulse to combine well.
- Add the flour 1 cup at a time and process until a ball of dough forms around the blade that is not tacky or sticky. You may or may not need additional flour.
- Transfer the dough to a floured surface. Knead the dough with your hands for 2 or 3 minutes then place a bowl over it and allow it to rest for 30 minutes to relax the gluten.
- Divide the dough into quarters and roll each one through a pasta machine until the sheets are thin enough to see your hands behind the sheet.
- Cut the sheets into 3-by-6-inch pieces and place them in single layers on clean towels until ready to cook.

Rolled dough before cutting lasagne



Ragu Bologna Style Ragu alla Bolognese

Bolognese ragu is the signature meat sauce of the region of Emilia Romagna. It is simmered for at least an hour to develop a complex layer of flavors and proper thickness. Cooking the ragu in a heavy duty enamel or similar pot will hold the heat steady and help to give a velvety texture to the ragu. Bolognese ragu is a classic sauce for lasagne and tagliatelle. The sauce also freezes beautifully.

Makes 4 cups

Ingredients

- ¼ pound pancetta
- 1 medium onion, quartered
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and quartered
- 1 rib celery, quartered
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ½ pound ground chuck
- ½ pound ground veal
- ½ pound ground pork
- ½ to 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 tablespoon tomato paste
- ½ cup dry red wine
- ½ cup milk or cream

Directions

- Mince the pancetta, onion, carrot, and celery together and set aside.
- Heat the olive oil in a heavy duty Dutch oven type pot. Cook the pancetta and minced vegetable mixture over low heat uncovered for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Stir in the ground meats, salt and pepper, and brown them completely.
- Stir the tomato paste into the wine and add it to the meat mixture.
- Simmer the ingredients uncovered for 45 minutes, adding the milk or cream a little at a time to keep the mixture from sticking while it cooks.

The milk also lends richness and creaminess to the sauce. The sauce should have a thick consistency.

Salsa di Besciamella Basic White Sauce

Makes 4 Cups

Ingredients

- ½ cup unsalted butter
- ½ cup unbleached all-purpose flour
- 4 cups hot milk
- Fine sea salt to taste
- Ground white pepper to taste

Directions

- Melt the butter over medium-low heat in a 1½ quart saucepan; do not let the butter brown.
- Whisk the flour into the butter and cook it until a uniform paste is formed and no streaks of flour remain.
- Slowly whisk in the milk. Cook about 10 minutes, stirring slowly until the sauce coats the back of a wooden spoon.
- Season with salt and pepper. Add herbs if desired.
- Tip: adding the milk hot will prevent bringing down the temperature of the ingredients.

To assemble the lasagne:

- Cook the sheets quickly in rapidly boiling salted water about 1 minute.
- Transfer the pieces to a dish of ice water to cool them down; pat them dry.
- Butter a 14-by-11-by-13-inch lasagne pan.
- Spread a thin layer of the besciamella sauce in the pan. Spread a layer of the ragu sauce over the cream sauce and sprinkle the top with grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese.
- Add another layer of lasagne and continue as above until all the ingredients have been used, ending with a layer of cream sauce and a sprinkling of cheese.
- Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 35 to 40 minutes or until heated through and top is crusty looking.
- Let stand 10 minutes covered before cutting.

Recipe from "Ciao Italia Family Classics" by Mary Ann Esposito ▲



Jurist

Supreme Court Justice
Samuel Alito
Finds Order in the Court

By Douglas Gladstone

Prudence

Among the many mementoes and keepsakes that adorn Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr.'s office in the U.S. Supreme Court are the famous "La Bellissima America" sculpture by Domenico Morelli of an immigrant Italian couple and their son, more than a dozen signed baseballs and bats, and the "Justice Samuel J. Alito Jr. Way" street sign from his Hamilton Township, N.J., hometown. But none make him more proud than the framed document of his immigrant Italian father's birth certificate from the Province of Reggio di Calabria.

The birth certificate, which the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C., presented to Alito after his Senate confirmation in 2006, hangs on a wall in his office. The Court's second Italian American justice is quick to explain that it once and for all put an end to a long-unanswered family question.

"My dad had papers that indicated he was born on February 22, but nobody was ever certain," says Alito, who turned 65 this past April. "The birth certificate conclusively says February 20. I was really moved by that." Alito's father, Samuel A. Alito Sr., came to America as an infant in 1914, the same year his mother, Rose (Fradusco) Alito, was born.

"My father and his father were very poor tenant farmers," he continues. "So for me, having this document

in my possession symbolizes the journey not only my family experienced, but many Italian American families experienced. They endured poverty and lack of opportunity on their way to finally realizing the American dream."

For his senior year at Princeton University, Alito studied in Italy. "My parents didn't really speak much Italian at home, and I wanted to connect with my Italian heritage," he says. He later wrote about the Constitutional Court of Italy for his senior thesis.

That year, he also noted in his Princeton yearbook his intention to one day "warm a seat on the Supreme Court."

More than four decades later, in August 2013, as a Supreme Court Associate Justice, Alito was still connecting to his heritage when he joined other prominent judges and scholars at the University of Florence as part of an ongoing Italian American Constitutional Dialogue sponsored by the University of Notre Dame's Program on Constitutional Structure.

So, in retrospect, it was a bit odd that, during Alito's Senate confirmation hearings, a former associate justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island was among a handful of rumor mongers accusing him of having "historical amnesia" with respect to his roots, claiming Alito's father wasn't born in Italy. For the record, the disparaging jurist was an Italian American, too. ➤



SAMUEL ANTHONY ALITO

Samuel Anthony Alito was born to Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Alito on April 1, 1950. He attended Hamilton High School East, Trenton. At Princeton he majored in the Woodrow Wilson School, and under the guidance of Professor Walter Murphy of Politics, wrote his thesis, *La corte costituzionale italiana*, which he researched in various sidewalk cafes in Rome and Bologna during the summer of 1971. He spent his senior year as a Woodrow Wilson Scholar thinking great and ineffable thoughts. He served as president of the Debate Panel during his junior year. He was a member of Stevenson Hall. Sam intends to go to law school and eventually to warm a seat on the Supreme Court. Sam's home ad-

Princeton University 1972 Nassau Herald Yearbook

Sam
intends
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law school
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on the
Supreme
Court

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Alito with his father, Samuel A. Alito Sr., in 1982 before his first Supreme Court argument.



Nominated by President George H. W. Bush to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, Alito took his oath in 1990 with his mother, Rose (Fradusco) Alito, and his wife, Martha-Ann Alito, at his side.

“I am very proud of my parents and my grandparents. I’ve always attempted to learn as much about their experiences, and be knowledgeable about those experiences, as I possibly can,” says Alito, who is married to Martha-Ann Bomgardner Alito, a former law librarian in the United States attorney’s office. They have two grown children, Laura and Philip.

As for the detractors, he adds, “You know, both Italians, as well as Italian Americans, are very individualistic and independent thinkers. We all don’t see things the same way. And that’s a good thing.”

Several of his positions over the last decade are proof positive of that, especially in one notable First Amendment case in which his was the lone dissent. In *Snyder v. Phelps*, though the Court held that an anti-gay activist group could not be prevented from picketing a military funeral, Alito sympathized with the father of the late Marine Lance Corporal Matthew Snyder, who was killed in Iraq. Commenting on the protests of the fundamentalist religious Westboro Baptist Church, who alleged Snyder was homosexual, Alito wrote:

“The First Amendment does not shield utterances that form ‘no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and are of such slight social value as a step to truth that any benefit that may be derived from them is clearly outweighed by the social interest in order and morality.’”

Order and morality, Alito continued, was not in any way being served by

the Westboro Baptist Church. “Allowing family members to have a few hours of peace without harassment does not undermine public debate,” he concluded.

When he was United States Attorney for New Jersey, Alito became famous for being a staunch advocate of law and order. He prosecuted a number of high level drug trafficking and corporate fraud cases and even took down Giovanni “John the Eagle” Riggi, the alleged head of the DeCavalcante crime family—the mob family that reportedly inspired “The Sopranos.”

Because of this reputation, T.M. Ward, a coffee shop near the federal courthouse in Newark, N.J., named a coffee blend after him called, appropriately enough, Alito’s Bold Justice.

Considered by many to be one of the Court’s most conservative justices, Alito again showed his bold, independent streak when he sided with the liberal block of the Court in the 2008 worker-protection case *Gomez-Perez v. Potter*, which cleared the way for federal workers who experience retaliation after filing age-discrimination complaints to sue for damages.

“All federal judges are required to do what’s right, not what’s necessarily popular,” says Alito, whom one observer likens to former major-league umpire Ralph “Babe” Pinelli. The first Italian American umpire in the major leagues, Pinelli, who ended his career behind the plate when Don Larsen pitched his perfect game in the 1956 World Series, “called ‘em like he saw ‘em.”

A lifelong Philadelphia Phillies fan who keeps a treasure trove of



Justice Alito with his children, Philip and Laura, at the ruins of Pompeii during the family’s trip in 2009.

baseball memorabilia in his office that’s reminiscent of the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, Alito immediately agrees with the analogy. “I try to do that,” he says. “I try to call it the way I see it.”

Perhaps because he does try to administer the letter of the law so keenly, and is such a strict constitutionalist, New York Times reporter Adam Liptak last October wrote that Alito comes across as “dour” in oral arguments. While it is a characterization he says doesn’t really bother him, he does not understand it, either.

“Our business is a very serious one,” Alito says of the Supreme Court. “Oral arguments should be business-like. It’s not an occasion to put on a show. There are serious issues at stake. I could try to say things that are amusing, but I don’t think oral arguments are supposed to be funny.”

(Editor’s Note – Alito was interviewed for this article one week



(Left to right: Justice Antonin Scalia, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Justice Elena Kagan, Justice Clarence Thomas, Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, Justice Stephen G. Breyer and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg)

after hearing oral arguments in the same sex marriage case, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, when his remark to attorney Mary L. Bonauto, that “It’s possible to approve of gay relationships, but not same sex marriage,” drew national media attention. In June, he dissented from the court’s decision that found a constitutional right to marriage equality, writing that the Constitution “says nothing about a right to same-sex marriage.”)

Which is not to suggest that Alito doesn’t have a sense of humor. Reminded that he used to pitch freelance articles to such periodicals as *The National Journal* and *American Spectator* during his salad days, he quickly replies, “I get to write a lot in my current job, and I am guaranteed to get published, too.”

“He’s got an incredibly dry wit,” says Katherine L. Pringle, who clerked for him when Alito served on the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, in Newark. Now a

partner in the Litigation Department at Friedman Kaplan Seiler & Adelman LLP in New York City, Pringle recalls an incident that she says attests to Alito’s playfulness.

“One of the judges in the Third Court was decorating her outside chambers with statues of lions,” recounts Pringle, “so Justice Alito thought it would be funny to one-up her by decorating his outside chambers with pink flamingoes.” (Which explains the couple of pink flamingoes inhabiting his office shelves.)

Alito, continues Pringle, is “a very warm man once you get to know him. It may take a little time to do that, but all of us in his extended family—and he considers all his former clerks part of his family—are devoted to him.

“Does he take his job seriously? Absolutely,” adds Pringle. “He’s very principled, and he certainly isn’t someone who would ever take a gratuitous jab against someone. He’s just a quiet guy who’s very down to earth.

That’s why he’s such a neat person.”

Alito’s younger sister, Rosemary concurs. “One of his law clerks once told me that Sam ‘never acts like he knows how important he is,’” says the co-chair of K&L Gates LLP’s global 170-lawyer Labor and Employment Practice. Named one of the most powerful employment attorneys in the country by *Human Resources Executive Magazine*, Rosemary Alito also chairs the Editorial Board of the weekly *New Jersey Law Journal*.

“People are aware of my brother’s tremendous judicial success, but they also don’t know how kind, generous and considerate a person he is,” she says, noting that her older brother “was pretty much as a child like he is today—thoughtful and intelligent.

“I am obviously biased, but despite having such a consuming job, he’ll always make time for his family, friends and extended family,” she adds. “He always takes the time to be in touch with people. I can’t tell you how many ▶



White House photo by Shealah Craighead



Above: Samuel and Martha-Ann Alito with Italian Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero and his wife Laura Denise Noce Benigni Olivieri

Left: President George W. Bush looks as Justice Samuel Alito is sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts on Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2006, in the East Room of the White House. At right are Alito's wife, Martha-Ann, their son Phil and daughter Laura.



Justice Samuel Alito with MLB great Tommy Lasorda and actor Alan Alda at the 2006 NIAF Anniversary Gala



The Phillie Phanatic, the official mascot of the Philadelphia Phillies MLB team, embraces lifelong Phillies fan Justice Samuel Alito at a welcome dinner at the Supreme Court, fall of 2007. Alito is seated beside retired Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, whom he replaced on the Court.

lawyers from New Jersey have called me over the years to tell me that whenever they were going through a particularly rough patch, Sam was always there to send them a note of encouragement.”

William R. Levi, who clerked for Alito in 2011, and is now chief counsel to U.S. Senator Mike Lee, describes Alito as “low key and unassuming.” A graduate of Yale University Law School like his former boss, Levi says Alito is “astonishingly intelligent and abnormally normal. He’s like the dad down the street who you’d throw the ball around with.”

Not surprisingly, given his passion for the game, Alito admits that, if he wasn’t one of the nine members of the Supreme Court team, he’d love to be

Major League Baseball Commissioner. There’s ample precedent for a jurist to be named commissioner of the game, too, since the very first Baseball Commissioner, Kenesaw Mountain Landis, had been a federal judge.

Landis, who once fined Standard Oil more than \$29 million for violating federal laws forbidding rebates on railroad freight tariffs, was viewed as a judge determined to rein in big business. Nicknamed “Squire,” he once told the group of owners interested in hiring him that, “I wouldn’t take this job for all the gold in the world unless I knew my hands were free.”

Shaken by the 1919 Black Sox Scandal, the game’s owners wanted to appoint a commissioner whose

firm actions would restore public confidence in the game. Landis, who wrote his own contract, accepted the job when the club owners agreed that he couldn’t be dismissed, have his pay reduced or be criticized in public.

“I’d love the set up that Landis had,” jokes Alito. “You couldn’t reverse my decisions.”

Now *that’s* bold justice. ▲

The author of two books, including “Carving A Niche for Himself; The Untold Story of Luigi Del Bianco and Mount Rushmore” (Bordighera Press, 2014), Douglas J. Gladstone is a regular contributor to these pages. His article on horse owner and breeder Mike Repole appeared in the Spring 2015 issue of Ambassador Magazine.

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**DIPLOMATIC
COURIER**
A Global Affairs Magazine

niaf's 40

under 40

Welcome to NIAF's 2015 **40 under 40**, our list of the most fascinating and up-and-coming young people of Italian heritage.

In this celebratory year of our 40th Anniversary, we also wanted to celebrate top young professionals who have emerged in all walks of life – the arts, music, sports, technology, culinary arts, finance, fashion, film, and many other fields. Some are already on the radar; the others will be soon. Some are aggressively and creatively taking traditional routes to success; others are forging alternative paths that will surprise and impress you. Three things they all share: They're young; they've got Italian roots; and they're making a difference. So, here are our 40 game changers under the age of 40.



Matteo Achilli

Chimellato Matteo

Matteo Achilli | 23

After Panorama Economy weekly dubbed Matteo Achilli "The Italian Zuckerberg" in 2012, people took note of this 23-year-old techie and his networking site Egomnia, which is sort of like the Match.com of careerists and companies. Achilli created Egomnia as a freshman at Bocconi University in Milan. Since then, more than 330,000 users and 700 companies have registered on his site. Last year, the BBC featured Achilli in its show "The Next Billionaires." Working out of Formello, Italy, he's now expanding Egomnia worldwide.

Francesca Aiello | 20

By 17, Francesca Aiello had launched her own successful swimwear line, with the help of her mother. By 19, the Malibu, Calif., native was presenting her swimsuits at the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Swim in Miami Beach, the youngest designer to ever present at the shows. Today, "Frankie's Bikinis" are especially popular on the West Coast and among celebrities. And the Malibu-native has become a hot commodity.



Rus Anson

Nicholas Albrecht | 33

Nicholas Albrecht is an Italian photographer who connects humans and nature. From Naples, Albrecht discovered photography studying fashion in Milan. He adjusted his focus at the Academy of Fine Arts in Naples, then moved to San Francisco. Once, he went to California's Salton Sea desert to shoot a few days and stayed 10 months. His images were chosen for the prestigious 2012 Review Santa Fe 100. In 2014, Albrecht published his first monograph: "One, No One, and One Hundred Thousand."

Chris Algieri | 31

A professional boxer from Huntington, N.Y., Chris Algieri



Nicola Benedetti

Simon Fowler

holds a record that'll get you in his corner. Outside the ring, the kid's got pluck, earning degrees from Stony Brook University and the New York Institute of Technology. His record is 20-2, his only losses to Manny Pacquiao and Amir "King" Kahn. In 2014, he was inducted into National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame as the 65th Italian American boxer to hold a world title.

Sophia Amoruso | 31

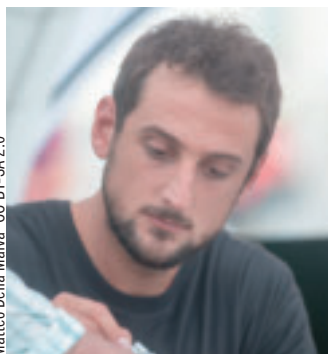
The founder of Nasty Gal, the wildly popular online clothing company, Sophia Amoruso started as a college dropout selling vintage clothes on eBay. In 2008, she launched the www.nastygal.com and Forbes labelled her "Fashion's New Phenom." Last year, the L.A.-based Amoruso published her bestseller "#GirlBoss,"

and created the GIRLBOSS Foundation that has given more than \$70,000 to creative female entrepreneurs. Her net worth is \$250 million; she stepped down in January as CEO, but remains executive chairman.



Talia Baiocchi | 30

When Talia Baiocchi abandoned plans for law school and moved to Italy to study wine, something was up. Backpacking to vineyards, the New Yorker learned trade secrets from family-run wineries. Back in America, she became one of the youngest female wine professionals in a male-dominated industry. After working at Italian Wine Merchants, she became Eater New York's first wine editor, wrote a book on sherry, and is currently editor-in-chief of Punch, an online drinks and culture magazine.



Matteo Della Malva CC BY-SA 2.0

Marco Belinelli | 29

Born in San Giovanni in Bologna, Marco Belinelli played professional basketball in Italy in the Lega A Virtus Bologna and for Fortitudo Bologna. In the 2007 National Basketball Association draft, the Golden State Warriors selected him in the first round. When the

San Antonio Spurs won the 2014 NBA championship, the shooting guard and three-point specialist became the first Italian-born player on a championship NBA team. He signed this summer with the Sacramento Kings.

Nicola Benedetti | 27

Nicola Benedetti is a talented violinist who is captivating the world of music. She grew up in Scotland, the daughter of Italian immigrant parents, and at age 8, she joined the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland. At 16, she won BBC's "Young Musician of the Year" competition and was signed by a recording studio. Now 27, Benedetti has produced eight albums and played with musical legends such as Andrea Bocelli and Rod Stewart.



MingleMedia/TWNetwork (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Sophia Bush | 32

Italian American actress Sophia Bush uses her celebrity status to make a difference. Born in Pasadena, Calif., she studied journalism at the University of Southern California before being cast as Brooke Davis on the TV drama "One Tree Hill" in 2003—a role she played until the show's 2012 finale. Well-known for her environmental activism, Bush was honored at the 2011 VH1 Do Something Awards. She now stars on NBC's "Chicago P.D."

Pix Talarico

Anthony Roth Costanzo



Giovanni Colavita | 39

Giovanni Colavita uprooted himself from his home in Italy in 2008 to take over the family-business, Colavita USA, one of the largest U.S. producers of olive oil and Italian products. He became the CEO after his uncle, Colavita USA founder Enrico Colavita, retired. While keeping the company family-focused, he made "Colavita" practically a household word and remade the company into one of the most modern "greener" olive oil producers nationwide, deriving 90 percent of its energy from solar panels.

Anthony Roth Costanzo | 32

Originally from North Carolina, countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo began performing professionally at age 11 and has since appeared in operas, concerts, recitals, films, and Broadway

shows. A Princeton graduate with a Master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music, Costanzo is a first-rate talent critics say shows focus and refinement while bringing youthful energy to the stage. In August, Opera News labeled him "Opera's Next Wave." When not appearing on screen or stage, he teaches graduate courses at Princeton.



ESAMASA

Samantha Cristoforetti | 38

The first female Italian astronaut in space, Samantha Cristoforetti never shied away from a challenge. To join the European Space Agency, she studied aerodynamics at France's SUPAERO aerospace engineering school, trained at the Italian Air Force Academy, and, in 2005, earned a degree in aeronautical sciences at the University of Naples. Last year, her five-month quest in ➤

TonyTheTiger (CC BY-SA 4.0)



Elena Delle Donne | 25

Top female basketball player Elena Delle Donne was born in Wilmington, Del., where she grew up on the basketball and volleyball courts. Countless colleges recruited the McDonald's All-American; she chose the University of Delaware. She played for the gold-medal 2011 USA National Team. Now playing for the WNBA Chicago Sky, she is on pace for a record-breaking season. But more important than hoops for Delle Donne is her sister, Lizzie, who is deaf, blind, autistic and has cerebral palsy. Last year, Delle Donne became a Special Olympics Global Ambassador to raise awareness of people with disabilities.

Exor S.p.A. (CC BY-SA 2.0)



space and her tweets of breathtaking pictures of Earth gained worldwide notice. Her ascending career is inspiring tomorrow's Italian female astronauts.

Chris D'Elia | 35

Italian American Chris D'Elia is a stand-up comedian, actor, producer and rapper from New Jersey. At age 12, he and his family moved to Los Angeles, where he took an interest in acting. That led him to standup comedy. Eventually, he was packing Hollywood clubs. Recently, he has costarred on NBC's sitcom "Whitney" and is currently starring in NBC's "Undateable." He continues performing stand-up, including on Comedy Central's "Live at Gotham."



Henry Diltz

A. Dola Baroni | 30

Visual artist A. Dola Baroni is a photographer and videographer based in Los Angeles. As a California native, she strives to capture the truth of the land and the people there. Much of her influence stems from her love of dance. In 2011, she was named to Photoboite's "30 under 30" List of Women Photographers. Since then, her highly creative, often challenging work is finding wider audiences, including through her All Visual LA project. She's all over the Internet.

Jorge Figueroa (CC BY 2.0)



Stefano Daniele | 25

Stefano Daniele is an Italian-born scientist making great strides to better understand Parkinson's Disease. In 2012, he earned a degree in neurobiology at Georgetown University. When his grandmother was diagnosed with Parkinson's, he dedicated his work to finding a cure. Conducting research at Georgetown University Medical Center, Daniele co-published his current findings on the disease in the May 2015 edition of Science Signaling. Continuing his quest, he has been accepted into the Yale University Medical School.

John Elkann | 39

John Elkann comes from a long line of entrepreneurs and royalty. He was born in New York and attended Polytechnic University of Turin before being appointed to

the Fiat Board at age 21. As the chosen heir of Fiat empire patriarch Giovanni Agnelli, Elkann inherited his role as Fiat chairman, chief executive, and chairman of the investment company Exor. He has become one of the world's most powerful and influential businessmen, stabilizing Fiat and overseeing the successful reinvention of Chrysler.

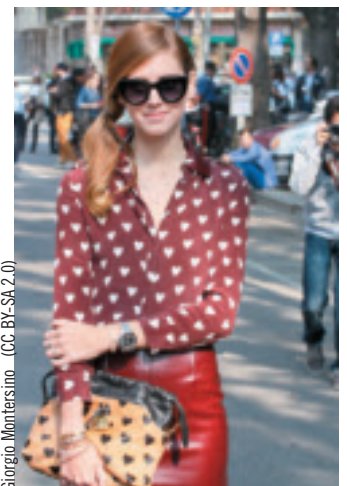
Chris Evans | 34

Boston native Chris Evans is an actor and director who studied at the Lee Strasberg Theatre and the Film Institute in New York before starring in numerous minor TV roles. His film breakout came as the Human Torch in the 2005 movie "Fantastic Four." He has starred in many independent films, but is best known for his role as Captain America in the Avengers movies. Evans has been nominated and has won many awards, including a People's Choice Award.



Lisa Falzone | 30

A Stanford University graduate, Lisa Falzone is the co-founder of Revel Systems, a leader in iPad Point of Sale solutions. Since starting the Silicon Valley company in 2010, Falzone has been a technological trailblazer, empowering entrepreneurs worldwide with her own venture to create the new standard in Point of Sale technology. She has been credited with turning the old-school perception of Point of Sale on its head. Her achievements have been recognized through numerous prestigious publications and awards, including Forbes and Business Insider.



Giorgio Montersino (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Chiara Ferragni | 28

Chiara Ferragni is a popular blogger and fashion designer who has been employed by Guess as a model and spokesperson. Writing under the blog name "The Blonde Salad," which is also the title of

Lady Gaga



Andrea Wilson (CC BY-SA 2.0)

her first book, she has delved into the world of fashion through collaborations with leading designers. In January 2015, the success of her blog and shoe line, the Chiara Ferragni Collection, became a subject of study at Harvard Business School.

Lady Gaga | 29

Known worldwide as Lady Gaga, the bestselling singer and songwriter is originally from Manhattan and was born Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta. In 2008, she released her debut studio album "The Fame," which propelled her singing career to the top of the charts. Since then, she has won six Grammy awards; one American Music Award, seven Billboard Music Awards, six Grammys, and too many others to count. Besides her music, Lady Gaga is also known for an eccentric sense of fashion.



Elena Torre (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Paolo Giordano | 32

Paolo Giordano is an Italian novelist whose books have gained literary kudos worldwide. Born in Turin, Italy, he earned a PhD in particle physics from the University of Turin. His first novel, "The Solitude of Prime Numbers," (2008) won the prestigious Premio Strega Award and has been translated into more than 40 languages. Giordano has since published "The Human

Body" (2012) and "Il Nero e L'Argento" (2014). He lives in Italy and writes for the newspaper Il Corriere della Serra.

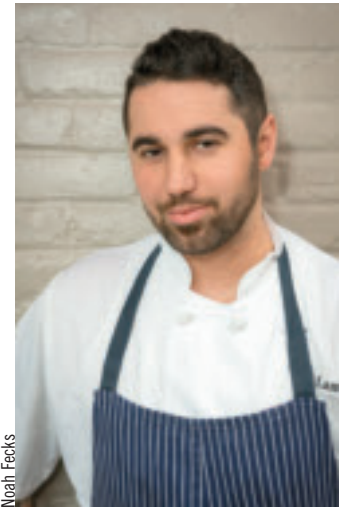


Davide Starinieri

Francesco Camillo Giorgino "Millo" | 36

Francesco Camillo Giorgino, a.k.a. Millo, is a street artist who has graced countless destinations throughout Europe with his spectacular work. Born in Mesagne, Italy, he was initially drawn to architecture before he began creating remarkable art on the sides of buildings. His art is mostly black and white, with the occasional splash of bold colors. In 2014, he won the B.Art Competition. Millo continues to travel around Europe and paint murals.

about her pride in her Sicilian and Abruzzese heritage. In 2008, she began her acting career in the Broadway musical production of "13." That led to a role on Nickelodeon's "Victorious." When the show ended, Grande's singing career took off. In 2013, she released her first album, "Yours Truly," and later that year, at the 2013 American Music Awards, won the New Artist of the Year Award.



Noah Feeks

Sal Lamboglia | 30

New York City native Sal Lamboglia's Italian roots run deep. His father was a Little Italy chef until the late '80s, and he comes from a family of bakers and butchers. After culinary school, Lamboglia began studying under well-known chef Andrew Carmellini at his A Voce restaurant in New York and has since helped to open several of Carmellini's NoHo Hospitality Group restaurants, including in 2014 the popular East Village restaurant Bar Primi. Lamboglia is now co-chef and partner there where he plates dishes with his father's time-honored sauce.



Melissa Rose (CC BY 2.0)

Ariana Grande | 22

World famous singer and actress, Ariana Grande is from Boca Raton, Fla. She's outspoken

Francesca Liberatore | 31

Francesca Liberatore is an Italian fashion designer making her way to the top of the fashion industry in Italy. In 2007, she graduated from London's Central Saint Martins, the leading center for art and design education. ➤



In 2009, she won the Next Generation Contest, further promoting her brand. Winning the 2014 DHL Exported Award guaranteed her design line a spot in New York Fashion Week. Liberatore shares her keen eye for fashion with several top-rated design schools around the world.

Tony Madalone | 30

Growing up near Cleveland, raised by a single mom, Tony Madalone thrived on the basketball court, earning a spot on Ashland University's team. But selling vintage items on eBay his junior year jumpstarted his inner entrepreneur. In 2009, he founded Fresh Brewed Tees, where famous athletes design and sell personalized apparel. In 2012, he founded The Social Dudes, a social-media marketing company. He also works with Ohio Homecoming, which fosters the growth of community in Cleveland. What's next, Tony?

Julia Mancuso | 31

Professional alpine ski racer Julia Mancuso is from Reno, Nev., and has skied her whole life. At 15, she began her worldwide skiing career at the 1999 World Cup. From 2001 on, she has skied in each consecutive World Cup,

collecting seven medals – three bronze and four silver. In the 2006 Olympics, she took home a gold medal. Mancuso continues to train and compete as a member of the United States Ski Team.



Ben Grey (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Anthony Rizzo | 25

Anthony Rizzo has overcome serious obstacles on his road to baseball stardom. He grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where he was drafted out of high school in the 2007 MLB draft by the Boston Red Sox. At 18, he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, setting back his career until chemotherapy beat the cancer. After three minor league seasons, Rizzo was traded to the San Diego Padres and made his major league debut. A season later, in 2012, he was traded to the Chicago Cubs where he

has become an elite player. The two-time All-Star first baseman honored his Sicilian heritage in the 2013 World Baseball Classic by wearing an Italian jersey.

Giorgio Rapicavoli | 29

Giorgio Rapicavoli learned to cook from his Italian mother, every Sunday in the family kitchen. He studied at the culinary arts at Johnson and Wales University before entering the restaurant business, earning the title Chef de Cuisine at age 21. Rapicavoli has cooked for Bill Clinton, Michael Jordan, and thousands of patrons at Eating House, his popular Miami restaurant where he's chef and co-owner. Rapicavoli won the Food Network's TV show "Chopped" twice. He has been nominated for a James Beard Rising Star Award.

Jaime Ross | 34

From Vermont, neuroscientist Jaime Ross' academic endeavors have taken her around the world. While a pre-med student at New York's St. Lawrence University, she studied abroad in Italy. After graduating at the top of her class, she took a job at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Md. Later, she was accepted to the prestigious

NIH-Karolinska Institute program where her focus has been on understanding aging. She currently lives and continues her research in neuroscience in Stockholm.

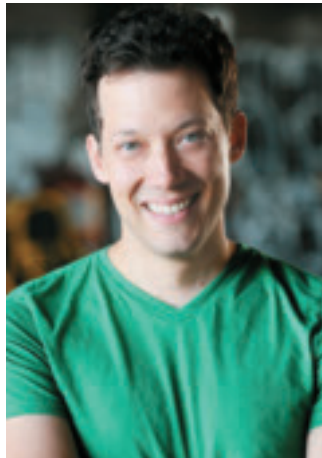
Alicia Quinn (Sacramone) | 27

Alicia Quinn, better known in the sports world as Alicia Sacramone, is a former member of the U.S. National Gymnastics Team. Growing up in Winchester, Mass., she started her gymnastics career early at the age of eight. After winning numerous U.S. Championship and World Championship medals, in 2008, at the Beijing Olympics, she won a team silver medal. She remains the most decorated U.S. gymnast in the history of World Championships. Sacramone married NFL quarterback Brady Quinn in 2014.

Alex Saper | 27

Alex Saper spent his childhood summers in Italy where he fell in love with Italian culture and cuisine. After graduating from Columbia University, he worked on Wall Street but, unfulfilled, quit his job to work at Eataly's flagship store in Torino, Italy. Involved in developing Eataly's Asian locations, Saper eventually returned to New York City to open the first Eataly store in the Unit-

ed States with his brother Adam, Saper, and chefs Mario Batali, Joe Bastianich and Lidia Bastianich. Now managing partner and chief operating officer of the popular Eataly NYC, he is expanding the Eataly brand to other U.S. cities.



John Tartaglia | 37

From Maple Shade Township, N.J., John Tartaglia is a puppeteer, singer and actor who, at 16, joined the cast of "Sesame Street" performing multiple characters. After working on "Sesame Street," he moved on to Broadway, where his performances as Princeton and Rod captivated audiences in "Avenue Q," which earned him a 2004 Tony Award nomination for Best Leading Actor in a Musical. He continues to act and currently hosts the "Sunday Funday with John Tartaglia" channel on Sirius XM Radio.

Christina Tosi | 33

Christina is the founder and owner of Momofuku Milk Bar, a bakery with five New York City locations, one in Toronto, and another planned for Washington, D.C. Tosi detoured from studying engineering at the University of Virginia to go to Florence, Italy. She returned to graduate from James Madison University and the French Culinary Institute, then started her career as a pastry chef. In 2008, she founded Momofuku Milk Bar in New



Christina Tosi

York City. In 2015, she received the James Beard Outstanding Pastry Chef Award. She lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.



Kartell/people (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Francesca Versace | 29

The niece of the late Versace founder Gianni, Francesca Versace inherited not just the family name but also the family talent. After attending Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, she produced her first collection for a Singapore-based label All Dressed Up. Although the family name would have contributed to the Francesca V label's success, the heiress proved herself on her own terms and outside the Versace empire by launching a collection that was different from the traditional Versace designs.

Bryan Voltaggio | 39

Bryan Voltaggio, the older of the Voltaggio chef brothers, still resides in his native Frederick, Md., where he began his career and owns his popular Volt restaurant. Trained at the Culinary Institute of America, studied under Chef Charlie Palmer, Voltaggio captured foodie imaginations competing against younger brother, Michael, on Bravo's popular TV show "Top Chef," and later "Top Chef Masters." Focusing on innovative, farm-to-table cuisine, Voltaggio is the co-owner and chef of five restaurants and has been nominated for two James Beard Foundation Awards.

Michael Voltaggio | 36

Michael Voltaggio, originally from Frederick, Md., has worked in the food industry since age 15. He attended the Greenbrier Hotel Culinary Apprenticeship Program and studied under notable chefs. Cooking at prestigious U.S. restaurants, he developed a distinctive modern approach to European cuisine. He competed against his brother, Bryan Voltaggio, on Bravo's TV series "Top Chef" and won the title. He has since been a finalist for the James Beard "Best New

Restaurant" award, and was named "Best New Chef" of Los Angeles, where he owns the restaurant ink.

Francesco Zampogna | 31

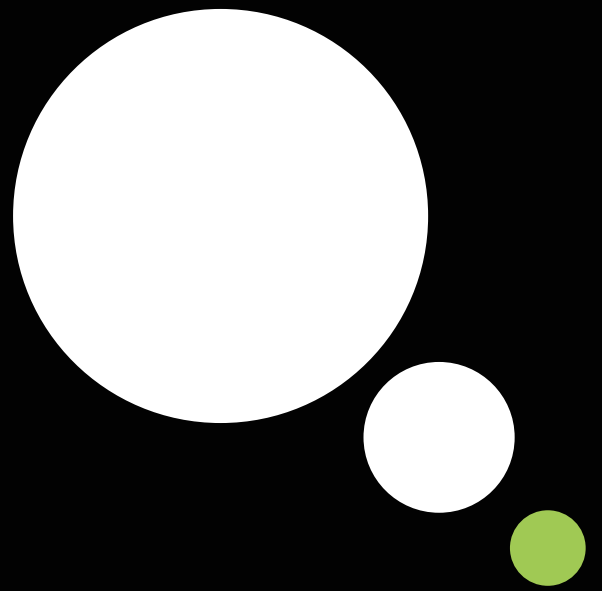
Originally from Naples, Fla., Francesco Zampogna is the director of Business Development for RSP Nutrition, a company that develops top-quality nutritional supplements designed to maximize bodybuilding and fitness results from athletic training. RSP has endorsements from athletes such as Jon Beason of the New York Giants and Colin McCarthy of Tennessee Titans. Prior to his involvement with RSP, Zampogna played football at the University of Miami. He currently lives in Miami.



Serena Zanello | 38

Although from Ivrea, Italy, Serena Zanello is building her career in American architecture. After graduating from Politecnico di Torino with a degree in architecture in 2003, she worked with Pininfarina Extra and Ctlr-Arch, where projects often brought her to the United States. As a design manager, she helped develop the design strategy for Starbucks. She currently is managing partner at her company, Dopamine Design, in San Francisco, and is a professor of interior and industrial design at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. ▲

Contributing to the 2015 "40 Under 40" List were Danielle DeSimone, Alex Benedetto and Bella Vagnoni.



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Glass artist
Valter Ballarin shaping
a piece at the workbench
at the Berengo Studio



By Frank Van Riper

Murano glass

All photos © Goodman/Van Riper Photography



venice's endangered sparkle

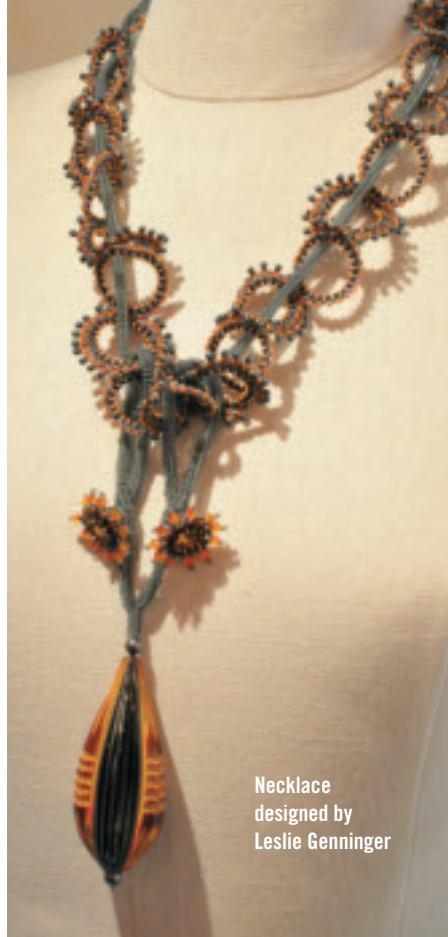
Think **Venice** and, besides canals and gondole, you might think of **beautiful handmade glass**—fashioned on the tiny island of Murano, a leisurely waterbus ride north from the great floating city.

Assortment of
Genninger-designed
glasswear

Most visitors' first encounter with Murano glass comes shortly after they get off the *vaporetto* at Colonna, near the famed Fondamenta dei Vetrai — the Boulevard of Glassmakers. There, a fellow will ask if you want to see a glass artist at work and, hearing no objection, will usher you into a small *fornace*, or glass studio with furnace, outfitted with bleachers. And you'll watch a craftsman fashion a clear knob of molten glass at the end of his blowpipe into a small, recognizable form—a tiny glass horse, for instance. Afterward, you are led into a large ornate showroom where hovering salespeople hope you will linger and buy. ➤



Guido Franzon at the Berengo studio



Necklace designed by Leslie Genninger

Silvano Signoretto confers with Dutch artist Clemens Briels about his glass sculpture *Silvano* and team were making at the Berengo Studio



to directed a team of several assistants while Briels recorded it all on his iPad.

It was a one-off glass sculpture of several intricate parts. Appearing to be part abstract sea creature, part vessel, it was—if nothing else—big and unwieldy as its molten components came together. Yet Signoretto, directing his three-man team from his work bench, appeared unfazed as they brought balls of hot glass to him from various *fornaci* and he gathered it all together into the piece. He used tools that are virtually unchanged over centuries. And he worked from little more than Briels' life-size drawings stuck to the outside of the nearest furnace — one in monochrome to show the sculpture's form, the other in color to indicate the necessary shades of glass.

We all held our breath for more than an hour until the last work was done. Then, at the maestro's signal, a worker took the blowpipe from him and, holding it upright, all but ran to an annealing oven and gently placed the finished sculpture into this special furnace that let the piece cool down gradually to relieve any stresses in the formed glass, thereby vastly increasing its strength.

Only then, with the piece safely in the annealing oven, did Signoretto put his feet up on his work bench, lean back and grin from ear to ear.

A decade or so ago, when my wife Judy and I were in Venice working on our book, “Serenissima: Venice in Winter,” we obviously needed to chronicle the venerated centuries-old art of Murano glass, one of the great treasures of Venice, if not all of Italy. Just as obviously, we need access to something more than a glass-making tourist trap.

So, we contacted Giampaolo Nason, whose family owns one of Murano's premier glass businesses. The Nason family on Murano dates back to 1625, when the family's glassblowers were included in Venice's “Golden Book,” the record of the city-state's master artisans. Murano itself became the center of Venetian glassmaking way back in 1291 when, fearing fire and destruction of the city's largely wooden buildings, authorities ordered glassmakers to move their *fornaci* to the nearby and comparatively isolated island.

“To keep us in town, we even got a title and crest from the *doge* that entitled us to marry his daughters,” Giampaolo's brother Giovanni once told *The Washingtonian Magazine*. Giampaolo, an elegant man who favored Windsor knots and wearing his alpaca coat over his shoulders as he greeted passersby on the island, happily informed Judy and me shortly after our arrival on Murano: “With me you can go anywhere.”

And we did.

At one atelier—just Judy, Giampaolo and me among the artisans—we watched as a maestro sat at his bench, a blowpipe with a glob of molten glass glowing at its end. He posed ever-so-briefly for a portrait, his eyes smiling, then hurried to turn the liquid glass into something solid and beautiful. At another bench, two men worked in a sinuous ballet putting the finishing touches on a large, intricately patterned vessel that seemed to hang tenuously from the end of the blowpipe.

Years later, still drawn to Venice, not as authors but as photo-workshop leaders, Judy and I regularly have visited the Berengo glass studio (www.berengo.com). It is unique on Murano since it is here that artists from all over the world come to have their drawings and diagrams turned into one-of-a-kind gallery and museum pieces by the world's finest glassworkers.

Among those artists was Clemens Briels, one of the Netherlands' best-known contemporary painters and sculptors. In baggy floral pants and white-frame eyeglasses, he hovered over the burly frame of maestro Silvano Signoretto, a Murano legend, as Signoret-

The state of the Murano glass industry “is a bit unstable, weak,” declares 55-year-old Leslie Genninger, an ex-pat American and Venetian glass designer whose Genninger Studio (www.genningerstudio.com) near the Peggy Guggenheim museum is renowned for its authentic Murano glass vessels, ornaments and jewelry, made by Muranese *maestri* from her original designs.

Murano, Genninger notes, is an “expensive island” in which stringent government regulations on environmental controls, taxation, etc., make it very difficult for “mom and pop” glass factories (that used to flourish there in decades past) to make a decent profit. A sobering fact: in the 1990s, Murano employed roughly 5,000 glass workers. Today, there are fewer than 1,000 — an astounding 80 percent drop.

“There are very few glass masters who are up and coming,” Genninger adds, noting that it literally takes years for a glass worker to learn the trade, “learning to blow while sitting at the bench.” This, in turn, “takes away from production time.”

Inevitably, competition from other countries, notably China and India, is hurting the market for real Murano glass. This can take the form of cheaply made counterfeits from abroad, available all over Venice, though rarely on Murano. At the higher end, foreign-made items like “Venetian” beads are manufactured in India using Muranese techniques—but at a fraction of the labor costs—then peddled in Venice as “real Murano glass.”

There is a movement under way now to mark all genuine Muranese glass as “Vetro Artistico Murano.” However, even this well-intentioned effort carries its own regulatory baggage since every individual piece of Murano glass needs to be so labeled and thus many legitimate businesses like Genninger’s opt out.

“I create (hundreds of) Murano glass beads,” he declares. “I just can’t put a ticket and a stamp on every one.”

Genninger has lived in Venice for 25 years and is married to a Venetian architect. “I am happy and proud to work with these artists and artisans,” he says. “It’s like a privilege to work with them.”



Under fire at the Berengo Studio in Murano

These artists, she notes, are using techniques that date back to the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, and also produce work that harkens back to that era, to the point that some of it may seem dated. “You try to do something outside the envelope,” she says, adding about her colleagues that “it can be hard to move them outside.”

Arguably the most renowned Venetian glass artist in the world, 80-year-old Lino Tagliapietra has had no problem adapting to a contemporary aesthetic.

Several years ago, he was honored with a spectacular retrospective at the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C. The stunningly intricate work on display at the Renwick gave new meaning to “flowing lines” and “sensuous shapes.” He is revered in Venice not just for his talent but for his willingness to teach his techniques to others. It should not surprise that Tagliapietra (his name, ironically, means stonecutter) and Genninger are friends.

Looking back over her career as an artist, Genninger says she loves “the freedom that this has given me over the years, to design and to work with these artists.”

From her home in Venice, itself a floating miracle, Genninger says: “It’s magical to see how brilliant these masters are at spinning molten glass.” ▲

Frank Van Riper is a Washington, D.C.-based photographer, journalist and author who works in collaboration with his wife and professional partner Judith Goodman. For information on their book, “Serenissima: Venice in Winter,” and on their upcoming fall and winter photography workshops in Umbria and Venice, visit www.veniceinwinter.com and www.GVRphoto.com



A Berengo Biennale piece on display at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York City



At the Genninger Studio in the heart of Venice where glass artist Leslie Genninger displays her designs

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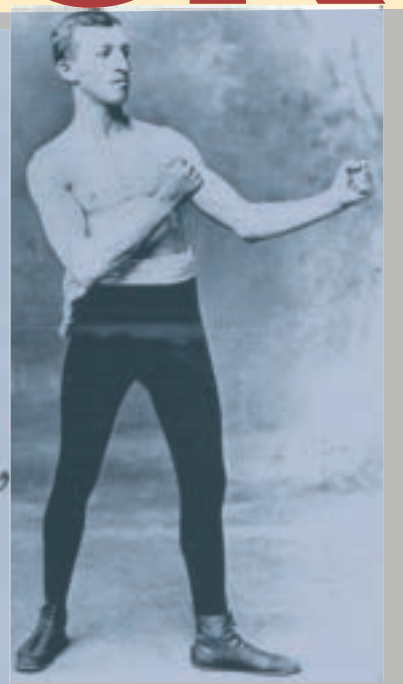
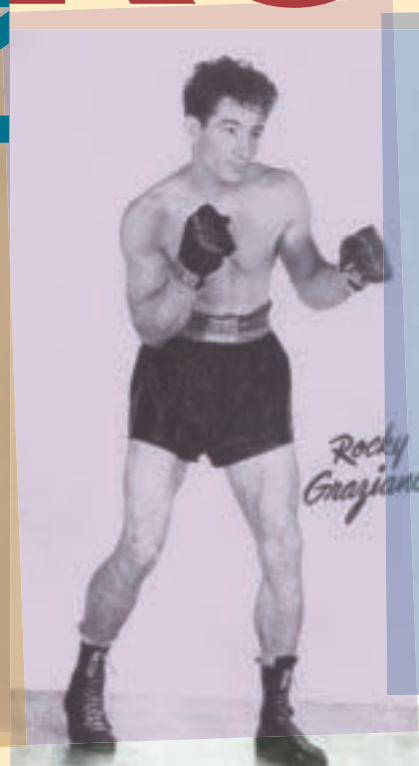
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THE REAL ROCKYS



When Italian American Prizefighters Dominated The Ring

By Rolando Vitale

When Sylvester Stallone portrayed Rocky Balboa in the award-winning film "Rocky"

(1976), it raised the profile of a hungry Italian fighter conquering the world with his fists. Rocky's fictional heroics served to remind us that ordinary Italian Americans with extraordinary athletic abilities had once occupied a prominent role inside the boxing ring. ➤

Clockwise from top: **Pete Herman** (Pietro Gulotta), two-time world bantam-weight champ and first Italian American to win an undisputed world boxing title in 1917. Two-time welterweight champ **Carmen Basilio** beat Sugar Ray Robinson to win the world middleweight crown. **Jake La Motta** won the world title in 1949. **Midget Wolast** (Joseph Loscalzo) ruled the flyweight division from 1930-1935. The "Father of Italian American prizefighters," **Casper Leon** (Gaspere Leone) fought from 1891-1904. **Rocky Graziano** (Tommaso Rocco Barbella) won the world middleweight title in 1947. Legendary **Johnny Dundee** (Giuseppe Carrara) boxed from 1912-1932, and won three world titles.

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Sylvester Stallone
as Rocky Balboa



Screenshot photo by Alatele.fr

of one of their own competing as an equal, especially against his hated Irish rival, something that was still not possible in the workplace or in any other field. Particularly great champions like Johnny Dundee (1910-32) and Tony Canzoneri (1924-39) typically attracted large crowds. Banquets and ceremonies held in their honor were organized by Italian businessmen and community groups nationally. Italian American boxers projected a tireless work ethic, physicality, and a spirit of adventure and strength of individualism at a time when progress for the ordinary working man was made difficult, with most legitimate pathways blocked. By confronting the physical hazards of a brutal sport, their heroic deeds symbolically restored pride in a group that had been declared inferior and undesirable by the enactment of immigration quotas and stripped of dignity by prolonged Italian stigmatization.

Not only was boxing the first sport to propel the Italians into the American mainstream, but the regularity of Italian success struck a hammer blow against the advocates of Nativist ideology and Teutonic superiority. It also facilitated a unifying and patriotic Italianate feeling, something that did not exist among Southern Italian immigrants who arrived at Ellis Island.

Most did not see themselves as Italian. Italian unification of 1861 was still an alien concept and the overwhelming majority only communicated in local dialects. By the '20s, this had changed as Italy had fought alongside its American allies in the First World War and 10 percent of the American soldiers were of Italian origin. But it was the struggle against discrimination and social bigotry, particularly during these years, that gained impetus, and the determination to gain equality and respect in every walk of American life bound together people from different Italian regions.

Although the Italian American boxer did not deliberately set out to be a bigot buster or a patriot, his prolific winning displays, at least at a visceral level, imbued a degree of

It's hard to fathom now, but for much of the first half of the 20th century, boxing was America's second most popular sport. And by the time the sport completed its transition from the unregulated era of bare-knuckle fighting to legalised status under the control of state athletic commissions, more than 3 million Italian immigrants landed in the New World. While Italian muscle and subservience fueled America's extraordinary economic growth story, these immigrants experienced widespread racism and alienation where prejudice even turned to lynching.

Against this hostile backdrop, and without the safety net of established political connections, or capital, or a large-scale entry into education, Italian immigrants and their Americanized sons realized early on that competitive organized sport, particularly prize fighting, was one way to bring about economic gain and freedom from societal constraints. Being good with your fists became an asset, especially in the teeming inner cities where fighting skills were used to ward off rival ethnic street gangs. Many examples of neighborhood enmity transferred to the boxing ring.

Between 1900 and 1955, in the most competitive era of boxing,

when there was generally one world champion in each of the traditional eight weight divisions, and a larger proportion of great fighters competing, 51 Italian American professional world-boxing champions and title claimants rose to the top of their respective weight classes, more than any other nationality. It was also the only ethnic group to crown undisputed world champions in every division including junior weight categories. During the Depression-hit '30s, characterized by mass unemployment and soup kitchens, they supplied the most leading contenders in seven out of 10 weight categories.

The ascendancy of the Italian American prizefighter represented the group's precarious position in American society. The largest proportion of top fighters hailed from Little Italys in New York City, with other Italian enclaves well represented across the country. Pete Herman, Johnny Dundee, Tony Canzoneri, Lou Ambers, Willie Pep, Rocky Graziano, Jake La Motta, Rocky Marciano and Carmen Basilio were among illustrious champions who were instrumental in many of the sport's golden moments.

Italian fervor and ethnic pride found its voice and expression in boxing through widespread support

confidence and new found optimism, and in some small way contributed towards the formation and consolidation of a solid single identity for the newly defined Italian American group. By the end of the '20s, even the industrial scale of the disrespectful practice of assuming an Irish or anglicized *nom de guerre* diminished, and Italian American champions like Frankie Genaro, Fidel La Barba, Tony Canzoneri, Willie La Morte, Battling Battalino and Mike Ballerino were clear opponents of the Irishized name tradition and preferred to enter the ring using their Italian family name.

For those who did change their names, it was simply a way of avoiding discrimination and achieving social acceptance. For all the admonishments centering on humiliation and the struggle for identity, it did not stop Italian boxers from speaking Italian at home, drinking wine and eating pasta. Rocky Graziano famously claimed that he became world champion by eating *pastafazool* (pasta and beans) every night. They participated in cultural and religious *feste* (feasts) and developed and consolidated neighborhood relationships within their peer groups.

Significantly, they maintained close family ties driven by a strong sense of duty, a vision and a desire to resolve familial hardship. They derived meaning and an identity through their physical endeavor. For example, Philadelphia's Midget Wolgast developed into the most dominant flyweight of the Depression era. When his father, who worked as a carpenter, became too ill to work, Wolgast, aged 21, single-handedly supported a family of 11 from his ring earnings. When Lou Ambers' father lost his saloon business during prohibition and later died suddenly, Ambers' family, comprising of nine other malnourished siblings, faced financial ruin and a fight for survival. He felt a personal obligation to look after his family.

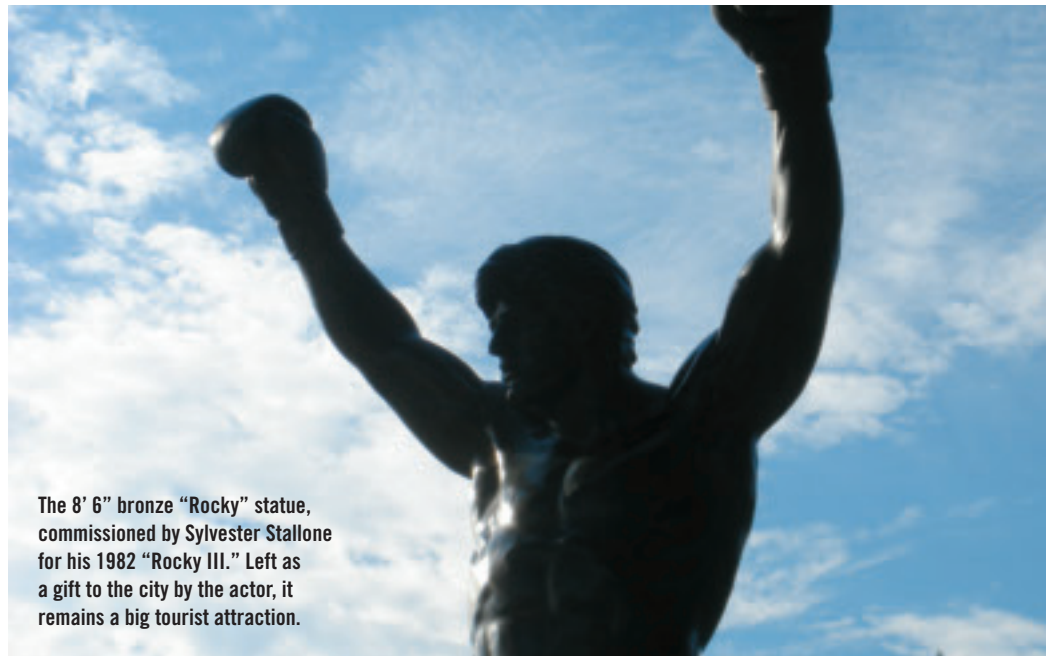
Heavyweight champion Rocky Marciano was particularly disturbed by the strong smell of the leather and the stench of his father's breath from

working in a Brockton shoe factory. Similarly, Carmen Basilio hated to see his father working like a "slave" in all weathers on his onion farm in Canastota. These boxers made good their promises to help.

At heart, Italian American boxers never lost sight of who they were, and they were mindful of their heritage. Their acceptance of the need to integrate into American society and embrace the host culture did not mean that they traded in their core Italianate beliefs and values.

The socio-political and economic

was an outstanding champion even among champions. The frail-looking 5-feet-5-inch son of a Sicilian construction worker was thrust forward as an unlikely standard bearer for Italian American communities in the United States that regarded his sporting accomplishments and unique skills as a spur to make it in America. Millions watched his fights on television and, each time he fought in the Big Apple, thousands of fans left Pep's hometown of Hartford to support him. Rocky Marciano picked up the mantle, and his invincibility during



The 8' 6" bronze "Rocky" statue, commissioned by Sylvester Stallone for his 1982 "Rocky III." Left as a gift to the city by the actor, it remains a big tourist attraction.

transformation of the post-Second World War period witnessed a fall in widespread discrimination, and like other Americans they shared in the economic prosperity. Most new housing was erected outside the main cities and the Italian cohort moved into their castles in the suburb.

Sporting tastes changed as a greater number of Italian Americans entered universities and initiatives like the GI Bill offered new possibilities. Paradoxically, up popped boxing role model Willie Pep (Guglielmo Papaleo). Adored by fans and acclaimed by writers for his superior interpretation of boxing science, Pep held the featherweight title between 1942-48, and again between 1949-50, effortlessly sweeping aside all of his rivals. He

the '50s signaled the last hurrah of the Italian American as a dominant mass fighting force.

Today, regrettably, few of us remember the decorated forebears from that particular time and place in American social and sporting history, which gloriously placed the Italian American in the forefront of the manly art. Instead, we have fictional Rocky Balboa as perhaps America's most famous and best loved Italian American "boxer." ▲

British author Rolando Vitale has worked for over 20 years as a writer, researcher and translator. "The Real Rockys: A History of the Golden Age of Italian Americans in Boxing 1900-1955" is his first book.



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Old and in *Lombardia*

Tracing History through
UNESCO World Heritage Sites

By Michelle Fabio

Lombardia is best known as the home of Milan, Italy's business hub, but the region's rich natural and cultural heritage goes back millions of years. Indeed, Lombardia's nine UNESCO World Heritage sites (the most of any Italian region) provide a solid framework for studying history from prehistoric times to the present. ▶

The La Galleria colonnade in Sabbioneta in Mantua



Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie where the rectory of the convent hosts Leonardo Da Vinci's mural "The Last Supper"

Here's the armchair version of a Lombardia's UNESCO field trip, along with practical traveling tips:

Monte San Giorgio (245-300 million years ago)

Monte San Giorgio, a 3,000-foot-tall, pyramid-shaped, forested mountain overlooking Switzerland's Lake Lugano, contains the world's best marine fossil records from the Middle Triassic Period.

So far, over 20,000 fossils (including fish, bivalves, crustaceans, ferns, mosses, reptiles and more) have been recovered from five different layers of this Alpine mountain. Fossils, reconstructions and illustrations of Monte San Giorgio's flora and fauna can be found in the Museo Civico dei Fossili di Besano (Varese province) and the Museo dei Fossili in Meride, Switzerland.

If you go: Even inexperienced hikers can be atop Monte San Giorgio in a couple hours—take the path that leaves from the Church of San Silvestro in Meride.

Rock drawings in Val Camonica (6000 B.C.)

In 1979, the rock drawings in Val Camonica (Brescia province) became Italy's first recognized UNESCO site. One of the world's most extensive collections of prehistoric petroglyphs, the carvings date back over 8,000 years and trace civilization's changes, from images of nomadic hunters to Christian symbols in the Middle Ages and beyond.

About 300,000 carvings spread over the areas of Cimbergo, Capo di Ponte, Darfo Boario Terme, Nadro and Paspardo have been confirmed. Several national and archaeological parks, a museum and a natural reserve have been created around them.

If you go: Book in advance for the Camonica Valley National Museum of Prehistory. Space is limited inside.

Prehistoric Pile Dwellings (5000-500 B.C.)

The 111 locations of this World Heritage site contain remains of prehistoric pile dwellings (stilt houses) in and around the Alps, dating to around 5000 to 500 B.C. The ancient structures, straw and wood huts on stilts built on the shores of lakes, rivers and wetlands, provide clues as to how early agrarian Neolithic and Bronze Age communities lived, worked, traded and traveled.

The exceptionally preserved sites, mostly underwater or under layers of sediment, are spread throughout Austria, France, Germany, Slovenia, Switzerland and Italy. Lombardy's pile dwellings are near Lake Garda and Lake Varese, where the most ancient houses have been identified on Isolino Virginia, a small island with an archaeological park and museum.

If you go: Confirm Il Museo Preistorico dell'Isolino Virginia's operating hours and how to get there (public transportation to the island has recently been a local controversy).

Longobards in Italy, Places of Power (568-774 A.D.)

Between the 6th and 8th centuries, a Germanic tribe arrived in Italy, converted to Christianity, and took over much of the peninsula. In their domination, the Lombards, or Longobards, made long-lasting artistic, cultural and spiritual contributions to Italian society and are credited with promoting the monastic lifestyle.

Moreover, Longobard monasteries, churches and fortresses in seven Italian towns (Brescia and Castelseprio in Lombardy; Cividale del Friuli, Spoleto, Campello sul Clitunno, Benevento and Monte Sant'Angelo in other regions) represent a convergence of the architectural styles of ancient Rome, the Byzantine Empire and Germanic northern Europe.

If you go: Allow a few hours to visit the monastic complex that houses the Museum of Santa Giulia in Brescia, which also includes visible Roman houses excavated below the old nunnery's orchard.

Mantua and Sabbioneta (15th-16th centuries)

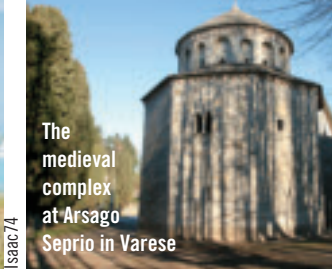
The towns of Mantua and Sabbioneta represent some of the finest architectural, artistic and cultural contributions to the Italian Renaissance, and we have a friendly urban-planning competition between members of the Gonzaga family to thank for them.

Mantua was renovated during the 15th and 16th centuries by the ruling Gonzaga family, grand patrons of the arts, who remodeled old palazzos and built new ones while incorporating courtyards and piazzas. Giuseppe Verdi's "Rigoletto" was inspired by this bustling artistic haven, and the House of Rigoletto and its gardens are in Piazza Sordello.

Alternately, Sabbioneta was created from scratch by Vespasiano I Gonzaga as an ideal city: grid pattern



Paleolithic pile dwelling near Lake Ledro



The medieval complex at Arsago Seprio in Varese



Medieval city of Mantua

streets and strategically placed public squares and monuments all enclosed by defensive stone walls. The city no longer buzzes with artists and can feel like a deserted movie set — a beautifully maintained one — but the ancient gates of the town (Porta della Vittoria and Porta di Accesso Imperiale) are highlights.

If you go: The UNESCO Mantova-Sabbioneta bus line, with a guide onboard, was created specifically for travelers. Book in advance.

Church and Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie (15th century)

The only UNESCO World Heritage site located in Milan is this 15th-century church and Dominican convent whose refectory holds one of the world's most famous and treasured paintings, Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper."

The Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie is worth a visit, with its dark, Gothic, frescoed nave, which contrasts sharply with the majestic dome and airy apses added after the original construction.

The main attraction, though, is da Vinci's imposing 15-by-29-foot masterpiece, which has survived the artist's failed experimental painting technique of tempera on two, non-damp-proof layers of stone, botched restoration attempts, and even a World War II bombing by the Allies that took out the rest of the refectory. More recent restorations have kept "The Last Supper" visitable, even though most of the paint you'll see is not the original.

If you go: Book well in advance (months) and dress conservatively for your 15 minutes inside the dining hall.

Sacri Monti (16th-17th centuries)

These nine "sacred mountains" in Piedmont and Lombardy are groups of Roman Catholic chapels, sanctuaries and other architectural gems integrated into natural surroundings

of lakes, hills and forests. Mostly, the devotional complexes consist of a series of chapels or kiosks with artwork depicting the lives of saints, the Virgin Mary or Christ, lining a path up the mountain side.

Lombardy claims the Sacro Monte of Varese, whose Holy Road and Sanctuary sits above the city, and the Sacro Monte of Ossuccio, 14 chapels nestled into olive groves near Lake Como. All offer spectacular views.

If you go: An added bonus of Sacro Monte of Varese is to stroll the quiet streets of the village of Santa Maria del Monte, part of the Campo dei Fiori Regional Park.

Crespi d'Adda (19th-20th centuries)

Founded in 1878, Crespi d'Adda in Capriate San Gervasio is recognized as the best preserved "company town" in southern Europe and still remains partially in use. This "ideal workers' village," near the Crespi family's textile factory along the Adda River, was designed to satisfy all the needs of workers and their families, "from the cradle to the grave," including housing, gardens and public service buildings such as a schools, churches, hospitals and theaters. The Crespi reigned, literally, from their castle, which is not open to visitors.

If you go: Book a guided tour to get the most from your visit.

Rhaetian Railway in the Albula/Bernina Landscapes (early 20th century)

The Albula-Bernina line, part of the Swiss-owned Rhaetian Railway, connects Switzerland with Tirano in Lombardy (Sondrio province) through more than 50 tunnels and covered galleries and nearly 200 viaducts and bridges. The Bernina Railway, which traverses the Bernina Pass, is the highest railway crossing in Europe at over 7,000 feet above sea level.

In naming it a World Heritage site, UNESCO recognized the rail-

way's "outstanding technical, architectural and environmental ensemble," which "embodies architectural and civil engineering achievements, in harmony with the landscapes through which they pass."

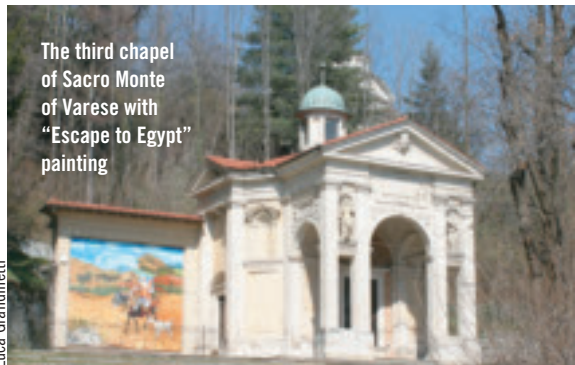
If you go: Book in advance to guarantee your window seat.

The Tentative List

Lombardia also has four places on UNESCO's "Tentative List," a site's first stop before being officially named a World Heritage site: the city of Bergamo, Pavia with Certosa, Lake Maggiore, and Lake D'Orta Lake lands and the 15th-17th-centuries Venetian works of defense.

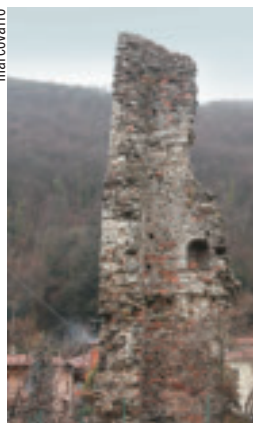
Let the field trip continue! ▲

Michelle Fabio is a freelance writer who has lived in her ancestral village in Calabria, Italy, since 2003. Her book, "52 Things to See and Do in Calabria," will be published soon by Gemelli Press. Her blog is Bleeding Espresso (bleedingspresso.com).



The third chapel of Sacro Monte of Varese with "Escape to Egypt" painting

Luca Grandinetti



Ruins of a Pezza medieval tower in Induno Olona

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WHERE wine REIGNS

© Donnafugata Photo by Fabio Gambina

Donnafugata Pandolfina district vineyard

By Dick Rosano

Southern Italy's Viniculture is No Longer Nowhere

Wine prices keep going up, but so does the quality of wine from every region in the world. If good wine can be made in Siberia, Vermont and Central Africa, it's no surprise that Italy — one of Earth's most famous and recognized wine cultures — would find a way to make historic wine from every one of its own regions.

Places like Abruzzo, Campania, Puglia and Sicily have been slow to fill the shelves in many U.S. wine cellars. But, with rising interest in the press and continued success in the glass, it won't be long before bottles hailing from the Mezzogiorno correct that omission.

"Southern Italy has hundreds of indigenous grapes that have been long ignored," says Lana Bortolot in a recent issue of *The Somm Journal*. White grapes such as Falanghina, Greco di Tufo, and Carricante, and red grapes

such as Nero d'Avola, Negroamaro, and Nero Mascalese, have been vinified in these southern regions for thousands of years. But even superstars like Aglianico and Primitivo have had trouble moving into the mainstream fine-wine market.

That is about to change.

"At the end of the 20th century, southern Italy's wine regions watched from a distance the skyrocketing success and acclaim heaped on their neighbors to the north," said Alison Napjus in *Wine Spectator*. "But, meanwhile, these lesser-known regions continued to strive, and with hard work, they now offer exciting whites and reds."

An added plus: These less publicized regions of Italy offer the best bargains of all. Try buying a 93-point wine for \$17 from more famous regions. But there are enterprising importers willing to dare the road less traveled, and thanks to their spirit of

adventure, we have a bounty of fine southern Italian wines.

It's not like they don't have embedded traditions. Some of these grapes have been grown since the days of ancient Rome. Thanks to local loyalty to indigenous grapes, obscure vines such as Frappato, Casacecchia and Pallagrello are still in the ground and we get to enjoy the cornucopia of flavors they provide.

There are now many new wine estates in the Mezzogiorno. Space alone limits this column to a subset of the total. Readers are encouraged to ask wine merchants for any region they are interested in, and use this column as a starting point, not an ending point.

With that said, let's take a little walk among the vines and highlight the treasures of each region in the south of Italy. ➤



Il Feuduccio vineyards in Abruzzo



Harvest in Donnafugata's Casale Bianco district



Villa Matilde owners: Salvatore and Maria Ida Avallone

Abruzzo

This region faces the Adriatic Sea, slightly above the “ankle” of Italy. Most of the agricultural area occupies the flatlands between the Apennines on the west and the sea on the east, and farmers share this land with vineyardists.

The region was known for wine produced by large co-ops until recent years when the careful application of training and new technology filtered down the peninsula. Empson was one of the first importers to zero in on Abruzzo, and can be credited with signing Il Feuduccio, a celebrity in the wine market. Montepulciano d’Abruzzo is a star in Il Feuduccio’s firmament, a perennially excellent wine with depth and mouthfeel. But the house also makes other red wines of distinction and a brisk Sauvignon Blanc for summertime.

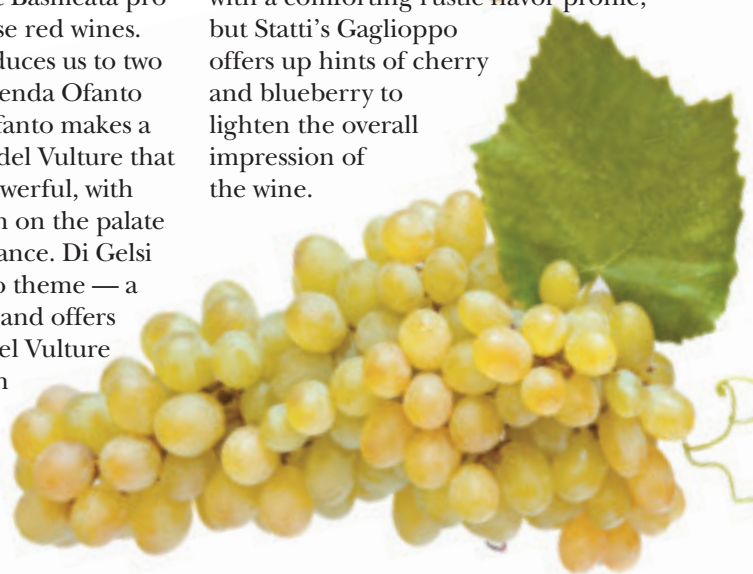
Basilicata

In their seminal book about Italian wine, “Vino,” Joseph Bastianich and David Lynch call Basilicata “the middle of nowhere.” That’s probably unfair on many levels, including the fact that the region is sandwiched between Puglia and Calabria — hardly “nowheres.” But the authors also remind the reader that Basilicata produces some powerhouse red wines.

Vias Imports introduces us to two leading candidates: Azienda Ofanto and Tenuta di Gelsi. Ofanto makes a L’Emozione Aglianico del Vulture that is as delicious as it is powerful, with dark fruit pouring forth on the palate and finishing with elegance. Di Gelsi continues the Aglianico theme — a feature of the south — and offers up both an Aglianico del Vulture and a Gelso Rosso, both scoring high marks for depth and personality, with sumptuous textures and pleasing complexity.

Calabria

Calabria owes much of its anonymity to its location, occupying the toe of the boot and far along most travelers’ itineraries. This region produces a lot of good to mediocre wine, but Statti is demonstrating why Calabria should be looked to for higher quality. The estate, imported by Vias, makes wines with a comforting rustic flavor profile, but Statti’s Gaglioppo offers up hints of cherry and blueberry to lighten the overall impression of the wine.



Il Feuduccio Winery owners Laura Lamaletto and her husband Paolo Neri

Grape cluster cleaning at the Donnafugata vineyards on the Sicilian island of Pantelleria





© Donnafugata Photo by Anna Pakula

Gabriella Rallo and daughter José Rallo of the Donnafugata Vineyards

Campania

Campania, one of Bastianich and Lynch’s “nowheres,” is making some of the most exciting new products for the wine market. Feudi di San Gregorio (brought to U.S. by Palm Bay Imports) has a long cast of excellent wines and could be the standard-bearer for the entire region. They’ve made a huge success of their whites, Fiano di Avellino and Greco di Tufo, but red wines based on Aglianico are also winning praise.

Terre del Principe (imported by Vias) brings a plush, ripe red wine in Castello delle Femmine, while Terradora di Paolo (also Vias) focuses on a southern star, Aglianico, to produce a red wine with nuances of coffee, anise and mint. Di Paolo also bottles a dazzling white wine, Irpinia Falanghina, with floral aromas and hints of almond and cream.

Villa Matilde is lately a powerhouse from the south. Its Falanghina Rocca dei Leoni and Falerno del Massico (both whites) are brisk and smooth, and complement the reds like its Taurasi, a blockbuster following the Aglianico script.

© Donnafugata Photo by Anna Pakula



José and Antonio Rallo taste-testing raisins at the Donnafugata vineyards on the Sicilian island of Pantelleria



Courtesy of Empson

Il Feuduccio winery in Orsogna, Province of Chieti, Abruzzo, renowned for Montepulciano d’Abruzzo

Puglia (includes Lecce and Salento)

This region has received a lot of attention in the American press in recent years. The discovery that its singular star, Primitivo, was proven by DNA analysis to be related to America’s own Zinfandel started the band-wagon, but now wine lovers are discovering Pugliese wines in their own right.

Starring roles are played by Agricole Vallone (imported by Quintessential), Cantele (Vias Imports), Matane (Empson), Ognisolle (Palm Bay Imports), and Tormaresca (Ste. Michelle Wine Estates). There is so much wine bounty in Puglia that an entire book could be written about the region, not to mention an entire article.

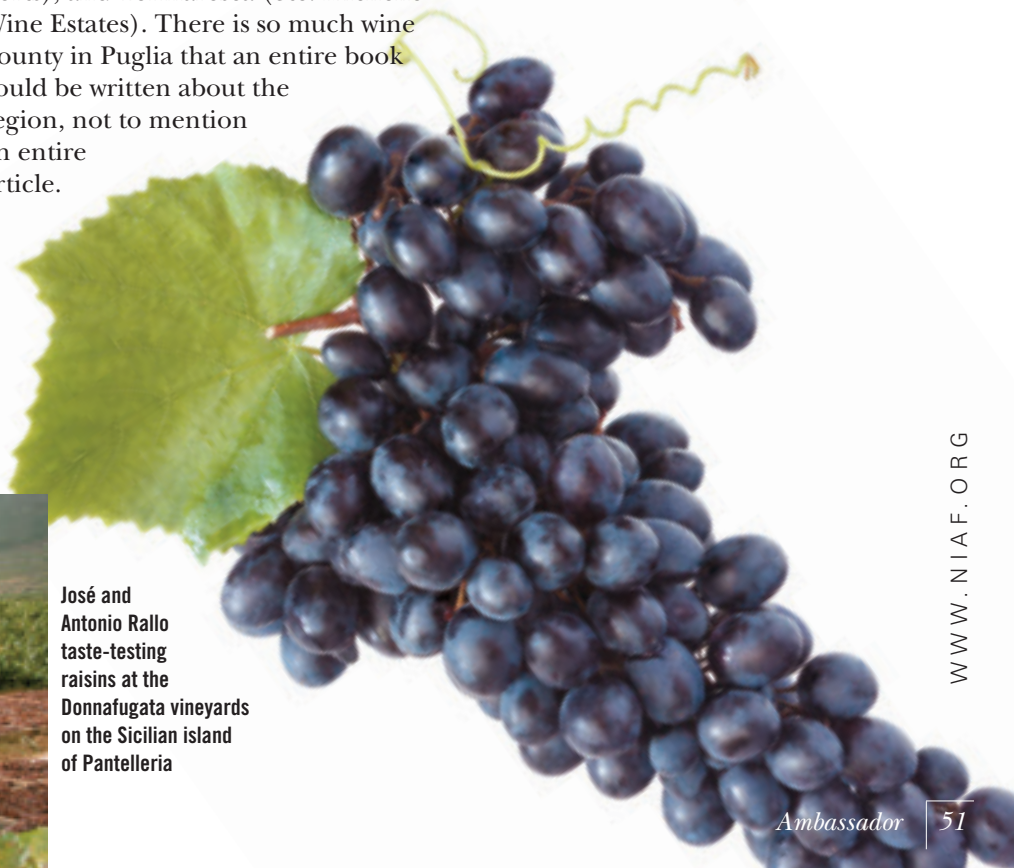


© Donnafugata Photo by Anna Pakula

Giacomo Rallo and son Antonio Rallo, producing fine Sicilian wine at their Donnafugata winery and vineyards

Sardinia

This island region sits off the west coast of Italy and is too often forgotten in the conversation about Italian wines. Although much that is produced is, in fact, still ordinary wine, Sardinia has made a strong case for indigenous grapes such as Cannonau and Carriignano, the latter of which forms the core of Santadi’s Tre Torri Carignano del Sulcis, a full-flavored and approachable wine imported by Empson. ➤



Carlo Hauner Jr. and vineyard manager Stefano Mirenda at the Hauner Vineyards on the Eastern coast of the Sicilian island of Salina



Courtesy of Empson

Sicily

Another island region, but Sicily is now well recognized for its wines. Donnafugata (imported by Folio Wine Partners) is a particular favorite and boasts a stellar portfolio, including delicious whites such as Anthilia and Lighea, and ripe full-bodied red wines such as Mille e una Notte.

Hauner (Empson) covers both spectrums, with dry, crisp whites like Salina Bianco and supple reds like the Hiera Terre with its extracted and refined flavors and concentrated finish.

Palm Bay Imports is a big player in Sicily, bringing wines from MandraRossa, Planeta and Zisola to America. True to the sound of its name, MandraRossa makes red wines such as Cartago, all from the island's premier grape, Nero d'Avola. Zisola (owned by the Mazzei family) also relies on this grape to produce its eponymous wine, with stunning complexity and rich textures, featuring plums, black cherries and blueberries with a twist, and honey and caramel scents!

Courtesy of Empson



The Hauner Vineyards on the Eastern coast of the small Sicilian island of Salina

Only the uninitiated would dismiss southern Italian wines; the wine cognoscenti regard them as hidden treasures. ▲

Dick Rosano is a wine, food and travel writer whose columns have appeared in The Washington Post, Wine Enthusiast, and other national magazines. He is the author of the novel "Tuscan Blood," a mystery set in Italian wine country, and "Hunting Truffles," which takes place in the truffle-rich region of Piedmont. His new book, "Wine Trivia...In So Many Words," was published in May.

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The

Autumn Italian American Reader

Before checking out our 2015 Autumn Reader, take a look out your window. What do you see? Probably the first signs of autumn—changing leaves, browning lawns, glimmering sunlight, longer shadows, chillier mornings.

Turns out that the word “autumn” derives from the ancient roots of Italy itself... as do so many words. Some etymologists believe the word’s origins pre-date the ancient Latin “autumnus,” tracing it to 6th-8th century B.C. and the Etruscan civilization located about where modern Tuscany is now, but larger. They think autumn’s root come from Etruscan words signifying the passing of the year or the maturing of the year. It apparently arrived in English by the 12th century by way of the Latin and then the Old French

“autompne,” and then took another 400 years (words take time) to be used commonly. Along with its parallel term for this season, “fall,” which some believe was a shortened term for the English saying “fall of the leaf,” autumn replaced the original English word—“harvest.”

But enough etymology, on to the books. As always, these books are either written by Italian American or Italian authors, or are of interest to Italian American readers, or both. Besides each book’s cover, we offer a beginning sentence or two of a telling passage. Our brief reviews are meant to whet your appetite. So as you watch the leaves turn, consider turning a few of these pages as well.

Buona lettura!





Photos © *Dream Pools: Enchanting Pools of Italy's Emerald Coast*, by Nico Filigheddu and Giovanni Maria Filigheddu, Skira, 2015



Dream Pools: Enchanting Pools of Italy's Emerald Coast

By Nico Maria Filigheddu and Giovanni Maria Filigheddu
 Edited by Adriano Asara
 Skira; 184 pages \$68 Hardcover

Water is the biggest star of every swimming pool. The color, the reflected light and the temperature are elements that contribute to the perception of extreme pleasure it is associated with. Like a scaled down version of the sea, a swimming pool reminds one of its most idyllic features: the small sheltered bays where there are no waves or currents and where the clear water offers a feeling of protection for those who swim in it...

Conventional wisdom warns that building a swimming pool in your backyard may not be the wisest of real estate investments. But paging through this coffee-table book's beautiful photos of stunning landscaped and stonescaped pools built in some of Italy's most exquisite backyards throws water on that notion.

Page after page, readers get to dip into the architecture and aesthetics of swimming pool design through the perspective of Filigheddu Construzioni, one of Italy's top

pool-construction companies that's known for masterful craftsmanship and keen sensibility in respectfully integrating materials into the natural surroundings.

The book features 12 high-end, high-concept, private swimming pools that the Arzachena-based firm created on Sardinia's Costa Smeralda (Emerald Coast). These pools will make your head swim! They not only range from discreet inland waterholes set in lush green gardens to ravishing coastal infinity pools extending from the rugged rocky Mediterranean terrain, but their backdrop is the breathtaking panoramas of bright turquoise seas and cerulean skies rimming Sardinia's pristine, north-eastern shoreline. And, somehow, whether shaded by juniper, phillyrea and wild olive or framed by granite boulders, these elegant pools look perfectly natural, as if they've always been there.

The book's text, which waxes poetic about pool creativity through the architect's eye, is written in both Italian and English, and explains some of the whys and hows of each dreamy poolside scene. In both languages, the underlying sentiments are the same throughout the book: When designing nature-partnering watery oases like these, why not dive into the deep end?

— Don Oldenburg ▶

**My Father's Daughter:
From Rome to Sicily**

By Gilda Morina Syverson
Divine Phoenix Books
292 pages; \$17.95

"Dad," I said, "I'm giving everyone something to be in charge of."

... "You're in charge of the language," I said, unsure what his response would be.

Dad's mood could change in a second, and we have been known to come head-to-head over the simplest comments. The Italian language is so natural to my father, though, that it seemed like a reasonable undertaking and a fair request.

Dad burst out laughing. "You're kidding?"

"No, Dad. I haven't had time to practice. So can you take on the language?"

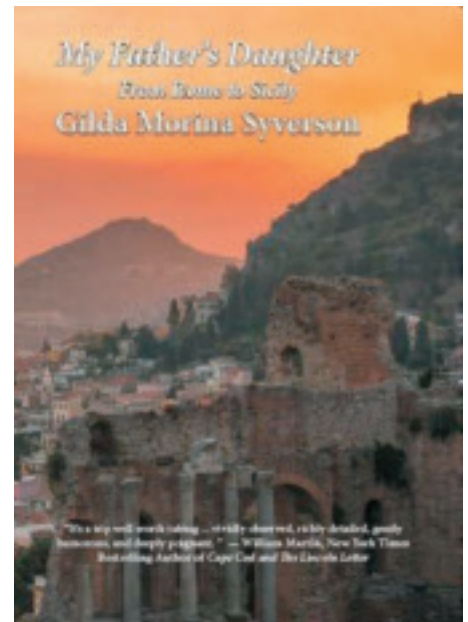
Still snickering, he said, "I thought that was why you were bringing me to begin with."

At age 50, Gilda Morina Syverson knows it is time to transform her relationship with her father by casting off her role as argumentative child and by healing the rifts that divide them.

"My Father's Daughter" tells the story of that inner transformation that slowly unfolds with discoveries about ancestry, family, culture, and connection to Italy.

From Rome to her father's hometown of Gualtieri Sicaminò, then her mother's hometown of Linguaglossa, Syverson uncovers clues to her parents' past, placing her own Italian American childhood in Syracuse, N.Y., in greater context. A garden full of lemon and orange trees; a shed where her father stole chicken eggs, sold them, and gambled away the money; the "passion and bewilderment" felt sensing her grandparents' presence at a mass in San Nicola di Bari church in Gualtieri, and other moments reveal to Syverson that her pilgrimage home is not only a journey to the old country but also to the new world of her adult self.

A Novello Literary Award Book



finalist, "My Father's Daughter" is a mosaic of travel memoir, identity writing and family stories. Syverson's stories will resonate with millions of Italian American Baby Boomers who grew up influenced by Italy in their most intimate family relationships.

—Kirsten Keppelo

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Cinematic Quests for Identity: The Hero's Encounter with the Beast

By Maria Garcia
Rowman & Littlefield; 244 pages;
\$54.78 Hardcover

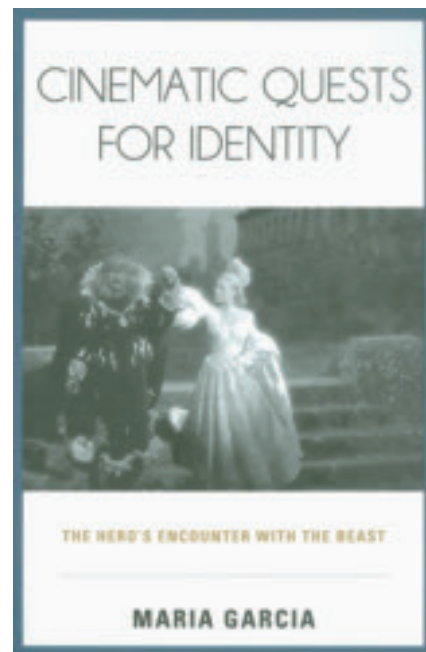
“We recount stories about the heroic quest...in order to illustrate the collective loss of identity and meaning in patriarchal societies where the Beast is confined to the shadows. Through depictions of the quest in the cinema, we are creating and recreating a language with which to discuss it, reinvigorating the most long-standing narrative tradition on earth.”

No stranger to the world of film, Maria Garcia opens “Cinematic Quests for Identity: The Hero's Encounter with the Beast” with the hefty promise of broadening the definition and the reader's understanding of “the quest” movie genre. Through her analysis of more than 15 films, ranging from

black-and-white classics such as “La Belle et La Bête,” to modern thrillers such as “The Silence of the Lambs,” or even iconic sports films such as “Moneyball,” Garcia delivers on her promise.

The book is broken down thematically, with each chapter exploring different aspects of the archetypal “hero's journey” and the obstacles in the form of “beasts” (such as Buffalo Bill in “The Silence of the Lambs”) that each film's protagonist must overcome to find their true identity.

Garcia, who is this magazine's film writer and critic, approaches the tried-and-true theme of the hero in an innovative way, using films that are not typically considered to be “quest” films. She pays special attention to the roles of female heroines in a male-dominated genre, providing readers with an entirely new cast of heroes to watch and learn from, combining modern stories with the fairytales of our childhoods. While her writing is academic-style film



criticism, this focused analysis is highly recommended for anyone looking to delve deeper into the world of film and the psychology behind the internal struggles of our movies' heroes.

—Danielle DeSimone

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KELLER WILLIAMS

Bebop, Swing, and Bella Musica: Jazz and the Italian American Experience

By Bill Dal Cerro and David Anthony Witter
Bella Musica Publishing
363 pages; \$19.95
Available at www.italiansinjazz.com

“Nick LaRocca was born in the Italian American section of New Orleans in 1889. This was two years before the Congo Square lynchings. Twenty-eight years later he would change the face of jazz music and become its first national and international star....”

In their new book, Bill Dal Cerro and David Anthony Witter chronicle the fascinating stories of Italian American musicians whose talents, hardships and perseverance helped to shape that uniquely American musical art form known as jazz.



Sure, Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett must be in any book about jazz. So must the great Louis Prima, and all three get chapters in this profile-driven volume. But who else? And why? That's the larger story the authors tell well, due largely to their exhaustive research and untiring devotion to the subject.

As the authors dig deeply into the evolution of modern-day jazz, starting back in circa-1900 ethnic melting pot that was New Orleans, then migrating to Chicago and elsewhere, they piece together a musical mosaic of little-known personalities, remarkable tales and surprising influences that leaves no doubt about the impact of Italian immigrants on jazz. From Nick LaRocca and his Original Dixieland Jazz Band to the riverboat clarinetist Leon Roppolo, from superstar Eddie Lang (Salvatore Massaro) to classy drummer Louis Bellson (Luigi Balassoni), the list is long. These were pioneers who taught the Benny Goodmans, Jimmy Dorseys and Louis Armstrongs a thing or two.

Besides chapters on Jazz in Italy,

and Women in Jazz, as well as a compendium minor Italian American musicians, the authors cover the context of immigrant experience and the cultural barriers these musicians faced that shaped their music and lives. In other words, all that Italian American jazz.

—Don Oldenburg

A Zany Slice of Italy

By Ivanka Di Felice
302 pages; \$12.99 paperback

“Course after course of fine Italian food is served. I realize that when you are full and your plate is empty, you must guard it with your life. Otherwise, it will be chock-full again within seconds”.

This hilarious novel tells the story of what initially was supposed to be an extended vacation in Italy, before Ivanka Di Felice and her husband, David, realize that their Canadian life no longer looked (or tasted) as great as their current Italian life. This collection of humorous anecdotes is told from the perspective of the non-Italian wife, Ivanka, as the couple adjusts to a new lifestyle. Constantly mistaken for being *Americani*, they evoke advice from each relative they encounter.



Upon arrival, Ivanka is thrown into the role of *la casalinga* (the housewife), and struggles with it but succeeds with the help of countless *zios* and *zias*, even learning to prepare the most exquisite meals for a crowd of up to 30 guests. Ivanka and David didn't find the relaxing life they came looking for in Italy, but they learned how lucky they are to have such a big, loving family.

Non-Italian spouses who've married into an Italian family will find this novel entertaining, its sounding familiar. Although Ivanka makes clear her genuine love for her new Italian family, most of the novel consists of her poking fun at

their overbearing tendencies. That said, certain readers may not appreciate her point of view, and thus will not find the humor in the story.

—Bella Vagnoni

Nonna's House: Cooking and Reminiscing with the Italian Grandmothers of Enoteca Maria

By Jody Scaravella
Atria Books; 288 pages; \$30 hardcover

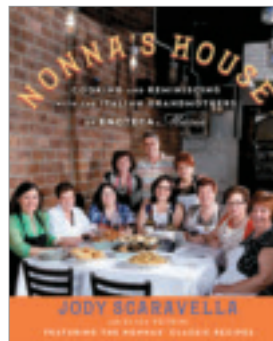
When you taste something you remember, it awakens your sense of identity, reminding you of where you came from. It ignites memories of being cared for or even spoiled—memories of your family's love.

Scaravella runs the popular Staten Island restaurant Enoteca Maria, where the chefs are Italian grandmothers from all different regions of Italy. The menu changes nightly depending on who's cooking, and that variety of flavor is reflected in “Nonna's House,” which includes recipes and stories from the nonnas about their personal relationships with food.

“Nonna's House” is a tasty collection of authentic regional dishes as well as traditional methods and techniques framed by gorgeous full-color photographs and some of the most delectable food writing you'll see in a cookbook. The delicious intersection of food, family and love that Italian Americans know so well permeates this delightful cookbook-memoir mix.

From Northern-Style Minestrone and Spaghetti with Potatoes and Cabbage to Stuffed Eggplant Palermo Style and Abruzzo-Style Farro Soup with Pancetta and Sage, there is something for everyone in “Nonna's House.” And you don't even have to travel to Staten Island to taste it—though you just might want to after devouring Scaravella's book.

—Michelle Fabio ▲



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the italian slate

five films from the 2015 tribeca film festival

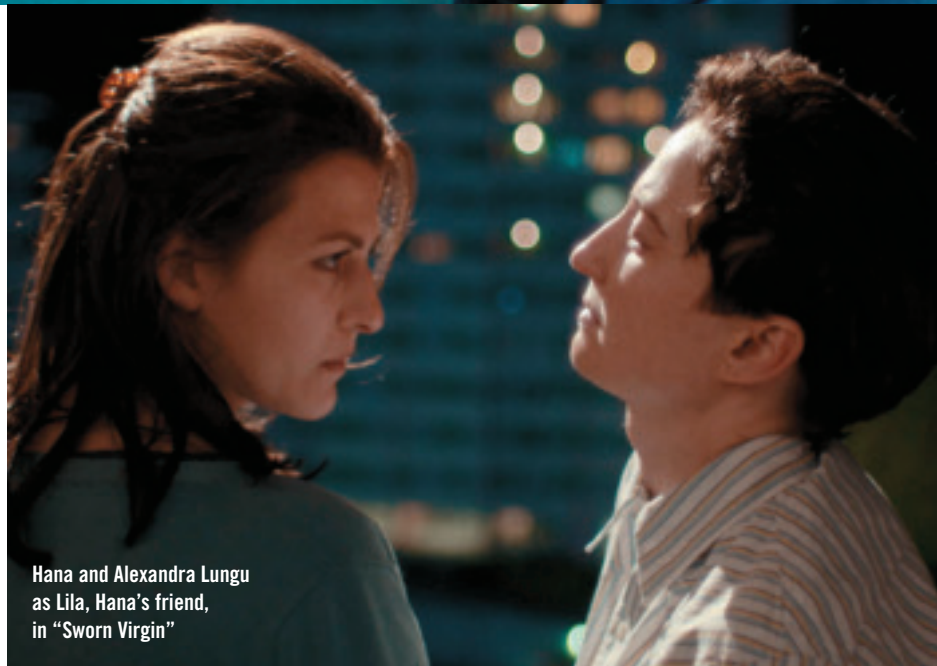
By Maria Garcia

In some circles, the Tribeca Film Festival is described as lacking a “curatorial voice,” but actually that is the charm of this popular New York City venue. Highbrow indie and art-house films attract an audience here, as do entertaining star

vehicles. The surprise this year was five feature-length movies by and about Italians and Italian-Americans. One will be in theaters soon, Laura Bispuri’s “Sworn Virgin,” which is about a young, Albanian woman’s quest for identity.



Alba Rohrwacher as Hana, the protagonist in “Sworn Virgin”



Hana and Alexandra Lungu as Lila, Hana’s friend, in “Sworn Virgin”

All Photos Courtesy of Tribeca Film Festival

Bispuri's debut feature film, an adaptation of Albanian author Elvira Done's novel, garnered the writer-director one of festival's most prestigious awards, the Nora Ephron Prize, for distinctive work by a woman filmmaker. The film's star, and Italy's most popular young actress, Alba Rohrwacher, plays the protagonist in Saverio Costanzo's "Hungry Hearts," another Italian film at Tribeca. For her role as an obsessive mother in that melodrama, Rohrwacher received the Best Actress Award at the 2014 Venice Film Festival.

Three other films were on Tribeca's Italian slate. Paolo and Vittorio Taviani's "Wondrous Boccaccio" is a beautiful and meticulously conceived movie based on several stories from Giovanni Boccaccio's 14th-century Italian classic, "The Decameron."

Cosima Spender's documentary, "Palio," chronicles the eponymous horseraces in Sienna that reach back to the 13th century, mostly through the eyes of its winning jockeys. While the British filmmaker celebrates the anachronistic conventions of the equestrian event, she also depicts horrific animal cruelty without comment or condemnation.

And, Reed Morano's "Meadowland," an absorbing directorial debut, is about a child kidnaping, and is the sole English-language movie on the Italian slate. Morano is the talented Italian American cinematographer known for her remarkable work on Courtney Hunt's "Frozen River" (2008).

During the Tribeca Film Festival, Istituto Luce Cinecittà, a government-funded organization that promotes Italian cinema at home and abroad, hosted a well-attended brunch

at Soho House, a hotel in the trendy Meatpacking District. The event allowed journalists, scholars and others in the Italian and Italian American cinema community to speak informally with the Italian-slate directors, producers and actors.

During the festival, Bispuri, Morano, and Paolo Taviani, with his wife and frequent collaborator Carolina Taviani, a costume designer, took time to speak with Ambassador magazine about their movies.

Paolo and his brother Vittorio have made 20 documentary and narrative films together over the past six decades, writing and directing as a team. The veteran filmmakers, now in their 80s, are well-known for their literary adaptations. In "Wondrous Boccaccio," just as in Boccaccio's "The Decameron," set during the days of the Black Plague, a group of

young people escape to a country villa after witnessing the deaths of family and friends. They decide that each day they spend there, one member of the group will tell a story to entertain the others.

Our interview at the Smyth Hotel in Tribeca began with a discussion of the problems of adapting a text that in the Italian literary canon has no equal except "La Commedia Divina," Dante Allighieri's classic. "We take the text as our initial inspiration, as was the case with Pirandello in 'Kaos,'" says Paolo, referring to his and Vittorio's 1984 adaptation of the writer's short stories. "And then we take a different road. We don't illustrate—we betray the literary work with our own personalities and with the art of cinema. Whether it is faithful or not to the original literary work is not a question that arises for us."

Some critics compared "Wondrous Boccaccio" to Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1971 adaptation of Boccaccio (also entitled "The Decameron"), which featured nudity and scatological imagery, or what is known as *boccaccesco*. They noted that the Tavianis' film lacked the sexual content they associated with the author's stories. "It represents the time in which Pasolini was making his film," Paolo explains, "when there was a certain climate around the idea of sexual freedom." Carolina adds: "In

reality, sex is never explicit in Boccaccio. He spoke about desire, but not the sexual act."

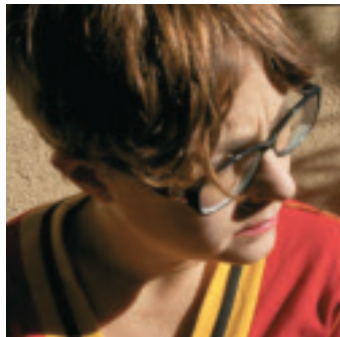
There is a decidedly sensual quality to "Wondrous Boccaccio," especially in the vivid colors that characterize the production design, and in Carolina's exquisite costumes. This bright palette tells much of the story as the film moves from the misery of the plague to the increasingly fantastic and magical tales the young people recount. Storytelling is an anodyne for their grief, and while "Wondrous Boccaccio" is about many things, including what Paolo calls "modern plagues," in the end,

the movie memorializes the narrative art form's potential for exposing society's historic and contemporary ills.

Similar attention to the role of design is seen in "Sworn Virgin" in the ways that the mountainous setting and the many adamantine and fluid textures of the film are used to define the characters. The movie begins with the childhood friendship of Hana and Lila (Flonja Kodheli), both of whom feel oppressed by the strict gender roles imposed upon them in their Albanian village. Hana, Bispuri's protagonist, eventually responds by seeking permission from village elders to live as a man. For this right, she must remain celibate.

"After years of solitude, and after years without any love, she feels like she is turning into a stone, like the mountains," Bispuri says during our interview at the Smyth Hotel. "Inside herself, she feels the female part emerge, and her body wants to shed this hard exterior." Hana is forced to leave her home, and eventually joins Lila who has married and escaped to Italy.

One would expect Morano's "Meadowland" to illustrate skillful lighting and camera placement, and it does, but the cinematographer-director is also practiced in the use of music as a metaphor for her characters' emotional states. The movie unfolds from Sarah's (Olivia Wilde) point of the view, the ➤



"Sworn Virgin" screenwriter-director Laura Bispuri



Paolo and Vittorio Taviani

kidnaped child's mother. She lives with her husband Phil (Luke Wilson), a New York City cop, and when the film opens, their son has been missing for a year. Morano describes the couple as psychologically "off the rails."

In a telephone interview, the director says, "I always felt that the music would set the scene. I felt that to put us into the couple's world, the sound would have to be weird."

For "weird," she turned to the "black-metal" music of Burzum, a



Norwegian band whose leader, Varg Vikernes, spent time in prison for murder and arson. Morano also uses the music to connect the psychological states of the characters in a later scene in which we hear Burzum



Alice Rohrwacher, writer-director of "Le meraviglie" ("The Wonders")

again, this time to signal a surprising shift in Luke's character that does not bode well for the couple's relationship. Morano's atmospheric thriller is somewhat predictable, but the performances are credible, and the movie is well-edited and scored, all substantial accomplishments for a first-timer.

Meanwhile, "Sworn Virgin" may reach theaters on the heels of another exciting quest movie, Italian writer-director Alice Rohrwacher's sophomore feature, "Le Miraviglie" ("The Wonders"). Scheduled to open this fall, the movie is a sublime portrait of a girl's quest for identity—and Rohrwacher's sister Alba Rohrwacher is terrific in a supporting role.



Screenshot from "Wondrous Boccaccio," directed by the legendary Italian filmmaking brothers

"Le Miraviglie," which won the prestigious Grand Prix award at Cannes, was filmed on location near Fiesole where the Rohrwacher family lived. It's also where Alice was once a beekeeper, not unlike her gentle-hearted protagonist Gelsomina (Alexandra Lungu). ▲

Maria Garcia is a New York City-based author; writer and frequent contributor to Ambassador magazine. Her reviews and feature articles also appear regularly in Film Journal International and Cineaste. Her new book, "Cinematic Quests for Identity: The Hero's Encounter with the Beast," was published this Spring. Visit her website and Facebook pages at mariagarciawrites.com and <https://facebook.com/MariaGarciaNYC/>.



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Olimpia Milano Comes to America

Italian Basketball at its Best

By Wayne Randazzo

There are few professional sports franchises worldwide that carry the prestige and aura of the New York Yankees or the Green Bay Packers or the Montreal Canadiens. While those historic clubs carry the torch for North America, in basketball-frenzied Italy, it's Olimpia Milano who steals the show.

Like the Yankees, Packers and Canadiens, Olimpia Milano's resume is racked with championships. Since their inaugural year of 1936, Olympia Milano has won 26 league titles, just one under the Yankees and their 27 World Series wins but in far less time.

Art Kenney played for Olimpia Milano in the early 1970s and remains involved with the team, which is making a historic trip to the United States this October to play exhibition games against Israel's Maccabi Tel Aviv at United Center in Chicago and Madison Square Garden in New York City.

"October marks Italian Heritage and Culture Month and honors the trip that Christopher Columbus made from his native Italy to discover the New World," Kenney says. "Now with the Euro Classic, and assistance from owner Giorgio Armani, Olimpia Milano is making the TransAtlantic voyage so that the New World can discover Italian Basketball with its style, excitement and class that is *all'Italiano—Si?! Si?! 'The Italians Are Coming, The Italians Are Coming!'*"

That's right, fashion icon Giorgio Armani is the owner of the club, and while he mostly stays out of the day-to-day running of the squad, he is very much a familiar face at the Olimpia Milano home games.

"Sport is a passion which I have had since my youth and which I will continue to enjoy," Armani says. "It fosters characteristics which, in my opinion, improve a man: commitment, sacrifice, determination, willpower. It improves the body and the character: no commitment, no success; or as you say, no pain no gain. Basketball is my favorite sport because it's rich in action, is fast-paced, and played

For special discounted tickets for NIAF members, family & friends to the October 1 Euro Classic Tournament at Chicago's United Center, 7 p.m., go to www.ticketmaster.com and enter Promotion Code: NIAF. For special discounted tickets for NIAF members, family & friends to the October 4 Euro Classic Tournament at New York's Madison Square Garden, 12 noon, go to www.ticketmaster.com and enter Promotional Code: NIAF. 1-212-645-6080 Promotion Code: NIAF



Photos courtesy of Olimpia Milano



Above: Olimpia Milan owner and fashion icon Giorgio Armani celebrates another Serie A championship in 2014 with players and fans. Left: Chicago native David Moss, a shooting guard-small forward for Olimpia Milano.

with passion. I'm a great basketball supporter and fan"

Italian basketball also has a great lineage to the United States and the NBA. Most people know about Kobe Bryant growing up in Italy while his father, Joe "Jellybean" Bryant, played all over Europe. But many other NBA names had lengthy tenures with Olimpia Milano.

Mike D'Antoni, who coached the Phoenix Suns, New York Knicks and Los Angeles Lakers, played 13 seasons for Olimpia Milano and had his number retired by the team. Others with Knicks ties to don the Olimpia Milano jerseys were NBA All-Stars Rolando Blackman and Bob McAdoo, former first-round NBA pick Italian player Danilo Gallinari, and perhaps most famously, former U.S. Senator and NBA All-Star who was one of the cornerstones of the Knicks last championship in 1973, Bill Bradley.

"The team was founded in 1936 under the zodiac sign of success," Kenney says. "They've been one of the most successful teams in the world. They really are the Yankees of basketball."

Just like the Yankees, Packers and Canadiens, Olimpia Milano will have the opportunity to play on their sport's biggest stages. They take the courts at United Center and Madison Square Garden in the first ever matchups of a top European basketball team and top Israeli basketball team on American soil when they square off with Maccabi Tel Aviv, on October 1 and 4, respectively. ▲

Wayne Randazzo is the New York Mets pregame and postgame show host and fill-in play-by-play announcer on WOR-AM. He's also a freelance television play-by-play announcer for ESPN and Big Ten Network.

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GALA is a Four Letter Word!

By John M. Viola
NIAF President



NIAF President John M. Viola (third from left), then 17, at a NIAF Gala

Gabriella Mileti

Did you ever notice when you hear the same word over and over again it starts to lose its meaning? For me that word is “Gala.”

I mean, sure, I understand the definition of the word “Gala,” and I understand what people expect from the NIAF Gala, but somewhere along the line, somewhere in the transition from being a NIAF member to leading the NIAF team, I might have lost the meaning of the NIAF Gala.

When I was young, I couldn’t wait for Gala Weekend. In my house, it was put on the new calendar with the same pen as Christmas Eve and Easter. It was so much a part of my family’s year that we just called it “The NIAF.” Every Autumn, under the weight of a school year only just beginning, I knew that I would find refuge in that one October weekend where my family and I would go down to Washington, D.C., to see friends from all over the country gathered in one place just to celebrate who we were and the culture that we all love so much. I loved renting a tux. I went to every movie screenings, asked questions at every conference, met so many passionate young Italian Americans (not to mention all the beautiful Italian girls), and fought with my brothers over the gift bags bursting with Italian goodies. The dinner was incomparable; VIPs and celebrities right there in front of me, everybody dressed to the nines and all celebrating how proud we were to be Italian Americans!

But, more than anything else, the moment that I waited for all year was the After Party. I can still picture the jam packed hotel lobby pulsing to that Italian American music that I grew up singing with my grandfathers, that soundtrack of my family life. And I met so many friends my own age, Italian Americans from around the nation equally as excited as I was for the chance to sing these songs together.

This was the only night of the year where being able to sing the English and Italian lyrics to “Pepino the Mouse” made you the coolest 17 year old in the room—and here I was at the center of it all. You never knew who was going join in. One year, we got to sing with Jerry Vale; another year Tommy Lasorda led a rendition of “From the Vine Came the Grapes.” I can remember spending the entire evening, song after song, dancing and cheering, wishing every weekend could be “The NIAF.” I should have been careful what I wished for!

Nowadays, doing this for a living, every day of my life is the NIAF Gala in some way or another. On my shoulders is the pressure to make sure our guests are having a good time, to make sure we’re getting the right honorees or celebrities, to make sure that everyone is enjoying the food (impossible with thousands of Italians), and ultimately to make sure that we’re raising enough money to support NIAF and its programs

throughout the year. Don’t get me wrong, I still love NIAF more than anything. But, sometimes, it’s difficult to remember that old magic feeling.

Gearing up for the 40th Anniversary, we’ve been digging through thousands of photographs from NIAF’s previous 39 Gala Weekends, trying to capture the Gala memories and the magical moments that so many of us have shared over the past 39 years. One day, our director of Programs, another long-time NIAF member, came into the office with a stack of photo albums from her own Gala experiences long ago. Sorting through her photos, there she found, without even knowing it had been there, a photo of me and my friends from around the country, in our rented tuxes, singing our hearts out at the After Party.

It was like having a time machine to be able to see a far younger version of myself beaming with happiness. As we’ve thumbed through these thousands of photos to pick out the ones that best encapsulated 40 years of magical moments, for me this one’s always stayed on top of the pile. Sure, I’m sweaty and pink, and my tux is a little too big for my awkward 17-year-old self, but I know how happy everyone in the picture was—and I know there’s nowhere else in the world but the NIAF Gala Weekend that could have created that moment I will treasure forever. ▲

NIAF 40 YEARS IN THE MAKING



WE'VE GOT A LOT TO BE PROUD OF!

THE 70s

■ On April, 26, 1975, 19 “interested and dedicated” leaders in the Italian American community

meet at the National Center for Ethnic Affairs to plan a national Italian American organization. With no official name, the working name is National Italian American Forum.

■ The Italian American Foundation opens the Foundation office in downtown Washington, D.C., on April 1, 1976, at 1725 DeSalle Street NW.

■ On July 27, 1976, IAF names members of its first Board of Directors: Board Chairman Jenò F. Paulucci; Joseph L. Alioto; Monsignor Geno C. Baroni; Dr. Rose Basile Green; Mario T. Noto; Antonio M. Marinelli; John G. Spatuzza; Jack Valenti; and John A. Volpe.

■ IAF hosts its 1st Bicentennial Tribute Dinner on Sept. 16, 1976, honoring the 29 Italian Americans who served in the 94th Congress. Former president Gerald Ford, President Jimmy Carter, and Vice-President Walter Mondale spoke. Jenò Paulucci tells the crowd: “Tonight, we, representing the Italian American community of this country, are truly visible.... You see the strength, you see the influence, you see the recognition of a unified community of Italian Americans.”

■ IAF publishes its first issue of Washington Newsletter (Jan.-Feb. 1977 edition) featuring the Foundation’s purpose and goals.

■ Summer of 1977, IAF surveys 65,000 Italian Americans on major issues confronting the Italian American community. More than 10,000 respond, answering questions ranging from demographics, to issues, to ethnicity. More than 56 percent say they spoke Italian; almost 50 percent are not college-educated.

■ IAF hosts the first conference of the Council of 1000, a financial and advisory group of top Italian American leaders, and Friends of the Foundation, on Feb. 15, 1978, at the Washington Hilton.

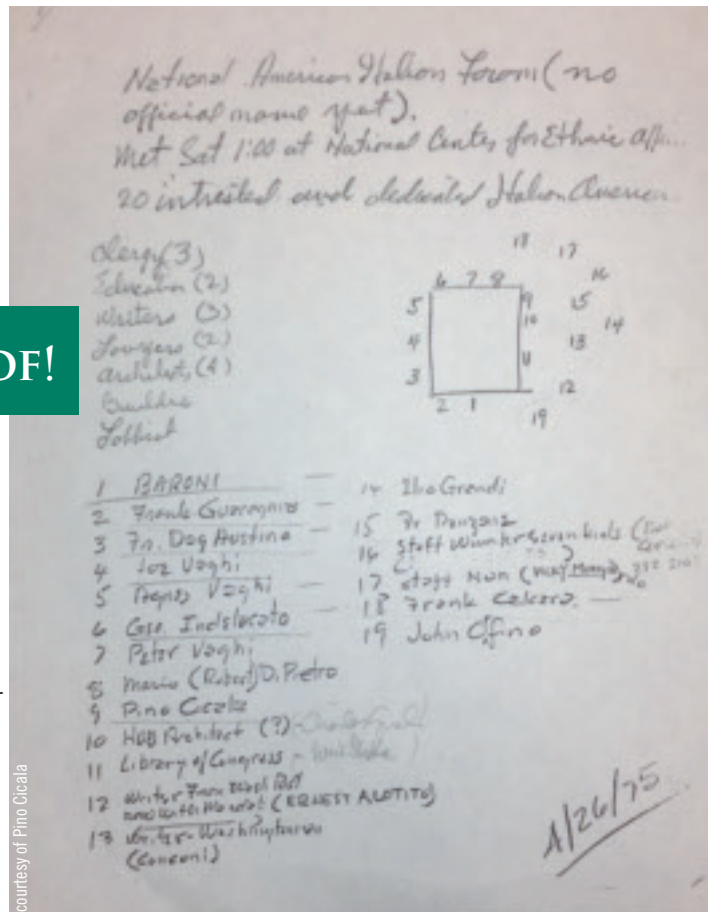
■ Former Massachusetts governor, Secretary of Transportation, and Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare John A. Volpe is elected NIAF president in spring 1978.

■ In 1978, the IAF Board of Directors unanimously approves adding the word “National” to the corporate title of IAF, officially changing the name to the National Italian American Foundation.

■ NIAF organizes its first international conference with the Giovanni Agnelli Foundation in Washington, D.C., on May 11-12, 1979. More than 400 participants come from 21 states and Italy.

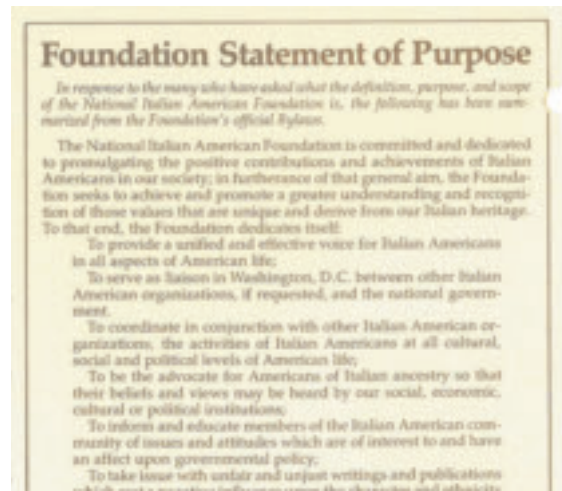
NIAF Statement of Purpose from its first Newsletter in 1977

courtesy of Pino Cicala



Notes from the first planning meeting on April 26, 1975, that would establish a national Italian American organization later to be named the National Italian American Foundation. Nineteen “interested and dedicated” leaders in the Italian American community meet at the National Center for Ethnic Affairs to plan establishing an organization whose working name is National Italian American Forum.

■ NIAF announces its first Endowment Fund publicly in May 1979. The goal is to raise \$1 million to provide enough interest income to support NIAF’s most essential activities.



NIAF Archives



Joe Dimaggio at the 1989 NIAF Awards Gala



Miss NIAF Susan Hoffman at the annual Columbus Day Parade in San Francisco in 1981. Driver: local Italian American leader Marino Nibbi.

Honorees Liza Minnelli and Peter Rodino at the 1988 NIAF Awards Gala



THE 80s

- NIAF's 3rd Bi-annual Tribute Dinner in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 13, 1980, attracts 2,500 people. President Jimmy Carter, Vice President Walter Mondale, and Republican presidential nominee Ronald Reagan attend.
- On Nov. 23, 1980, a major earthquake devastates about 1,000 towns and villages throughout the Campania and Basilicata regions of southern Italy, and in the Irpinia area. On Dec. 11, 1980, President Jimmy Carter names six NIAF Board members to his earthquake task force.
- NIAF starts raising funds in 1981 to provide educational scholarships and increase its visibility at regional festivals.
- NIAF inaugurates the NIAF Public Policy Forum in 1982 to distribute newspaper length columns on important current issues on a weekly basis to the Italian and non-Italian media.
- NIAF honors Sophia Loren at its Fourth Biannual Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 11, 1982.

- NIAF Endowment pledges topped \$800,000 in September 1982. Endowment Fund Chairman Edward DiLoreto notes that "the most satisfying part of the fundraising effort" had been receiving a \$1,000 gift from a young former NIAF intern.
- Official opening of a day-care center for disabled children in Lapio, Italy, on Nov. 14, 1982, thanks, in part, to a \$225,000 NIAF grant. Lapio is in Campania where the 1980 earthquake struck.
- On May 15, 1983, the New York Times publishes an article titled "Italian-Americans Coming into Their Own," which highlights NIAF.
- In September 1983, NIAF begins holding its Washington Gala annually instead of every two years. The sole honoree that year is legendary film director Frank Capra.
- NIAF moves its offices to 666 11th Street NW, in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 15, 1983.
- NIAF hosts the premiere on May 19, 1984, in Washington, D.C., of "The Stonecarvers," a documentary examining the work of traditional stone carvers on the Washington Cathedral. It won an Oscar in 1985.
- On Sept. 15, 1984, President Ronald Reagan, Vice President George H. W. Bush, and their Democratic Party rivals Walter F. Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro attend NIAF's 5th Biannual Congressional Awards Dinner.
- NIAF launches major new activities in 1985 aimed at Americans of Italian heritage, aged 18 to 40, through its newly established Youth Activities Division.



NIAF Founder Jenò Paulucci and President Ronald Reagan who spoke at NIAF's 10th Anniversary Gala in 1985

- In 1985, NIAF announces the creation of a Media Institute to assist national and local media seeking accurate and authentic portrayals of Italian American life and contributions to America.
- Frank Sinatra is the sole honoree at the 1985 NIAF 10th Anniversary Gala. The legendary crooner remarks that "the NIAF award is special because it came from family." President Ronald Reagan gives a speech.
- In 1986, NIAF initiates a student exchange program with Italy through a cooperative project with the United States Information Agency; NIAF and Italy exchanges 30 students.
- In 1987, NIAF pledges to raise \$1 million to assist restoring art treasures in Venice.
- Joe Di Maggio misses the first game of the 1989 World Series to attend NIAF's 14th Anniversary Gala where he was an honoree. He said, "You know, NIAF is important to me, when an old broken-down center fielder leaves the first night of the World Series to be here." ➤



Three of the National Cathedral stone carvers (Frank Zic, Roger Morigi and Vincent Palumbo) in the documentary film "The Stonecarvers." NIAF hosted the 1984 premiere.



Jack Valenti and Al Pacino at the 1997 Gala



Sylvester Stallone at the 1991 NIAD Awards Gala

THE 90s

In the 1990s, NIAF broadens its mission to include promoting Italian language and culture,

making substantial grants to promote the Italian culture, and taking a broader international focus.

NIAF publishes a Columbus 1992 Resource Handbook—62 pages of suggestions on media relations, program ideas for schools, businesses and the community, and a historical overview of the Columbus celebrations in the United States.

In spring 1990, the U.S. Department of State names NIAF as the private sector repository for donated funds to help restore and renovate Villa Taverna, the home of the American ambassador in Rome.

President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush attend the NIAF Anniversary Gala in Washington, D.C., for the fifth time, on Oct. 20, 1990.

NIAF hosts a celebrity golf tournament and dinner on July 1-2, 1991, to benefit Gulf War veterans. Legendary comedian George Burns entertains.

At the NIAF Anniversary Gala Awards Dinner on Oct. 23, 1993, actor Danny De Vito gets a laugh from President Bill Clinton as he sits on the president's lap. Among the honorees: actor Alan Alda, NFL great Dan Marino, and fashion magnate Paola Fendi.

Summer of 1994: NIAF and Eva Franchi, whose husband, legendary singer Sergio Franchi, died four years earlier, host the first Sergio Franchi Memorial Concert at the Franchi Estate in Stonington, Conn.

NIAF establishes the Italian American Wall of Honor, in March 1994, in conjunction with the purchase of its new permanent headquarters building, in Washington, D.C.

On June 1, 1994, NIAF moves into its new headquarters at 1860 19th Street NW, in Washington, D.C.

At the Washington Gala, on Oct. 29, 1994, Arts/Fashion honoree Giorgio Armani says: "I feel as though I am an Italian American because America was the first country to understand and like my approach to fashion. It is America that has always inspired me...."

At the Washington Gala on Oct. 5, 1996, legendary MLB hall of famer Yogi Berra, NIAF's Sports honoree, says, "I sure thank my pop Pietro and my mom Paolina for not missing the boat."



Alan Alda at the 1990 Gala Awards Dinner



Miami Dolphins Quarterback Dan Marino at the 1990 Anniversary Gala



NIAF moved into its current headquarters in 1994.





Jack Valenti, Piero Corsini, Roberto Benigni, Tony Bennett and Joe Cerrell at the 2003 Anniversary Gala

THE 00s

- Summer of 2001: NIAF hosts 160 student exchanges—120 Italian Americans to Italy and 40 Italians to the United States.
- In September 2001, NIAF raises more than \$500,000 for its Twin Towers Relief Fund-ACRI as an educational fund for the children of the firefighters, police, emergency medical personnel and other rescue workers who perished in the terrorist attacks in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001.
- On Oct. 8, 2001, President George W. Bush meets with NIAF Chairman Frank J. Guarini, NIAF President Joseph R. Cerrell, and a delegation of Italian American leaders, at the White House to sign the annual Columbus Day Proclamation.
- At NIAF's 36th Anniversary Gala, on Oct. 20, 2001, NIAF salutes 9-11 heroes Arlington County Battalion fire chief Jim Bonzano; NYPD Chief of Internal Affairs Charles Campisi; FDNY Chief of Operations Salvatore Cassano ; and FDNY Chief Peter J. Ganci Jr.'s widow Kathleen Ganci and three children.
- On June 6, 2002, NIAF names actor Joe Mantegna, who portrayed a U.S. Supreme Court Justice in the CBS-TV series "First Monday," as Foundation's celebrity spokesperson.
- NIAF speaks out on June 26, 2002, against the frenzy of media coverage of the funeral of organized crime boss John Gotti, criticizing the media's "peculiar fascination" as "inappropriate in its proportion, insulting to law abiding persons and insensitive to John Gotti's victims."
- In July 2002, NIAF selects 80 Italian American junior high and high school students to participate in its all-expenses-paid Students to Leaders (S2L) Program in New York City and Washington, D.C.
- NIAF establishes a special fund on Nov. 4, 2002, to help the families whose children perished in the earthquake in the town of San Giuliano di Puglia, in the region of Molise.
- On Oct. 29, 2002, at its 27th Anniversary Awards Gala, NIAF inducts Robert De Niro and Sophia Loren into the Italian American Hall of Fame, with singer Tony Bennett singing to Loren, "Wait till you see her, you won't believe your eyes."
- On Feb. 12, 2003, NIAF announces \$20,000 in scholarships for students (ages 8-18) to study the Italian language and culture at Lago del Bosco, an Italian language summer camp in Minnesota.
- Actresses Linda Dano and Patti LuPone award NIAF scholarships in their names on April 15, 2003, to two students at NIAF's East Coast Gala in New York City.
- In June 2003, NIAF joins forces with the Order Sons of Italy in America and UNICO to work with former NIAF board member Matilda Raffa Cuomo and the Embassy of Italy to get the College Board to approve an Italian language course and exam as part of the Advanced Placement (AP) Program for high school students.
- NIAF partners with Progresso Quality Foods on a project to preserve authentic Italian recipes "before they are lost forever." Recipes are archived at the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota.
- NIAF inducts Academy Award-winning actor Ernest Borgnine, baseball legend Yogi Berra, and NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue into the Italian American Hall of Fame at its East Coast Gala on April 20, 2004, in New York City. ➤



Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia at the 2004 Anniversary Gala



Barbara Bush, Frank D. Stella and former President Bill Clinton at the 2006 Anniversary Gala



One America Award honorees Angelo Dundee and Muhammad Ali with President Bill Clinton and NIAF Chairman Frank J. Guarini at the 2000 Awards Gala

- U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, the first Italian American to serve as a justice on the Supreme Court, is the guest of honor at NIAF's first New England Gala on May 22, 2004, in Boston, Mass.
- Headlining the list of honorees at NIAF's 29th Anniversary Gala, Oct. 16, 2004, are country-music star Tim McGraw and legendary tenor Luciano Pavarotti.
- NIAF hosts first event of the Frank J. Guarini Public Policy Forum on Capitol Hill, March 9, 2005.
- NIAF honors award-winning actor Stanley Tucci and Ameritrade CEO Joseph Moglia at its East Coast Gala on April 13, 2005.
- In Sept. 6, 2005, NIAF Founding Chairman Jenò Paulucci and his wife Lois arrange through their family foundation to send more than 100,000 gallons of drinking water to the survivors of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.
- On Oct. 24, 2005, NIAF honors Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Peter Pace, Intel Corporation CEO Paul Otellini, Travelocity CEO Michelle Peluso, and Ambassador Peter Secchia at NIAF's 30th Anniversary Gala in Washington, D.C.
- NIAF and the Embassy of Italy together offer an online dual citizenship resource in October 2005.
- On Oct. 20, 2006, President George W. Bush makes a surprise appearance at pre-Gala show featuring Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons, continuing a three-decade tradition of every U.S. president attending the Foundation's Gala weekend.

- Earlier that day, honoree former President George H.W. Bush gives the keynote address at the NIAF luncheon. Other NIAF 2006 honorees include Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito Jr., and actress Anne Bancroft.
- At NIAF's 32nd Anniversary Awards Gala, in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 12, 2007, Academy Award-winning director Martin Scorsese receives the Jack Valenti Award, which he helped to establish in memory of Jack Valenti, a NIAF founding member and former head of the Motion Picture Association of America. Other honorees: AARP CEO William D. Novelli, U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi; actress Ellen Pompeo; and actress, singer and entrepreneur Connie Stevens.
- Former NIAF Board Members Ambassador Peter F. Secchia and Lee Rizzuto each pledge \$1 million to endow the NIAF Voyage of Discovery Program (formerly Gift of Discovery), which enables young Italian Americans to see Italy for the first time.
- On Dec. 4, 2007, NIAF announces a collaboration with the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission to distribute "The Universality of Italian Heritage Curriculum" – lesson plans for grades K-12.
- On Oct. 17, 2008, NIAF honors Louis Zamperini, a former Olympian and World War II prisoner of war, during the its annual Education Luncheon.

- NIAF's Women's Forum brings Christmas cheer to the mothers, wives and girlfriends of wounded soldiers at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center on Dec. 2, 2008.
- NIAF honors screen icon Gina Lollobrigida and actor Leonardo DiCaprio at NIAF's 33rd Anniversary Awards Gala on Oct. 18, 2008.
- In April 2009, NIAF establishes a special NIAF/Abruzzo Relief Fund to help victims of the devastating earthquake in the town of L'Aquila and other small towns in central Italy's region of Abruzzo.
- On July 9, 2009, President Barack Obama recognizes the joint efforts of NIAF and the U.S. State Department to raise funds for the University of L'Aquila and its displaced students impacted by the earthquake.



President Bill Clinton addresses the 2000 NIAF Gala Awards Dinner



NIAF's inaugural group of Voyage of Discovery students in Urbino, Italy



Jerry Vale and Joe Piscopo at the 2010 New York City Gala

- Speaking about her pride in her Italian heritage and NIAF's efforts to help those earthquake victims in Abruzzo, U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi delivers a stirring speech at NIAF's 34th Anniversary Awards Gala on Oct. 24, 2009. With Jimmy Kimmel hosting, NIAF honors actress Carla Gugino, Chef Lidia Bastianich, and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano.
- In 2010, NIAF issues a challenge grant of \$500,000 to raise funds to support the Advanced Placement (AP) Language and Culture Program in Italian for high school students across the nation. Frank J. Guarini, NIAF Chairman Emeritus, donates \$250,000.
- On May 28, 2010, singing legend Frankie Valli sings with former Chicago cast of the hit show "Jersey Boys," along with crooner Jerry Vale and other honorees at NIAF's "A Night in New York."
- Giuliana DePandi Rancic and Danny DeVito headline NIAF's 35th Anniversary Awards Gala in Washington, D.C., Oct. 23, 2010. Among the honorees are Italian film producer Aurelio De Laurentiis and Michigan State basketball coach Tom Izzo.
- In October 2010, NIAF receives the largest philanthropic gift in its history, a \$2.6 million bequest from the estate of the late Victoria J. Mastrobuono, a long-time patron of education and the performing arts, and a dedicated NIAF supporter and council member.
- On May 19, 2011, NIAF honors MLB Hall of Famer and Dodgers great Tommy Lasorda; Oscar-nominated film producer Dana Brunetti; actor, screenwriter and director Jon Favreau; and actor Gary Sinise at its West Coast Gala in Santa Monica, Calif.
- During NIAF's 36th Anniversary Awards Gala at the Washington Hilton on Oct. 29, 2011, President Barack Obama delivers the keynote address recalling the history of the Italian American community and how it offers lessons in the struggles of immigrants today. Among those honored: Gianni Versace S.p.A. Chairman Santo Versace; Ohio Senate minority leader Capri Cafaro; former U.S. Congressman and NIAF Chairman Emeritus Frank J. Guarini, and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Dion DiMucci.
- On June 27, 2012, NIAF establishes the Italian American Relief Fund to unite Italian American organizations, corporations and individuals in providing immediate response whenever natural catastrophes and other disasters occur in Italy. The program received over \$200,000 in donations for relief efforts to benefit the Region of Emilia Romagna in the aftermath of the 2012 earthquake.
- MLB All-Star Mike Piazza hosts NIAF's 37th Anniversary Awards Gala on Oct. 13, 2012. Honorees included: Audi of America CEO Mark Del Rosso; Ferrero Group CEO Giovanni Ferrero; and University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Head Coach Geno Auriemma.
- On Nov. 6, 2012, NIAF encourages members and supporters, and all Italian American organizations, to make donations to help families that lost their homes in Hurricane Sandy.
- In Philadelphia, on Sept. 9, 2013, NIAF partners with the Commit Foundation to celebrate the bravery and commitment of returning Italian American veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, pairing 25 veterans with mentors from the Italian American community.
- Maria Bartiromo and Joe Piscopo host NIAF's 38th Anniversary Awards Gala in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 26, 2013. Among the honorees: former CIA Director Leon Panetta and award-winning actor and director Paul Sorvino.
- On Feb. 6, 2014, NIAF announces a \$500,000 grant from the late Ernest L. Pellegrini, one of the Foundation's donors, to the University of Maryland's Classics Department for a project entitled "Between Washington and Ancient Rome: The NIAF Pellegrini Program on Roman Antiquity and Its Legacy in America."
- On Oct. 9, 2014, NIAF launches "Save Columbus Day" initiative counter efforts in some states to replace the traditional Columbus Day celebration with "Indigenous People's Day."
- In 2014, NIAF begins public outreach events through major U.S. cities with special screenings of the upcoming documentary "The Italian Americans," which would air in early 2015 on PBS channels nationwide. ▶

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Above: Gina Lollobrigida and Danny DeVito at the 2008 Anniversary Gala



NIAF Archives

Left: Honoree Tim McGraw and Yogi Berra at the 2004 Awards Gala



NIAF Archives

Sophia Loren at the 2002 NIAF Awards Gala

- NIAF unveils its Italian American Museum at the Ambassador Peter F. Secchia Building headquarters in October 2014..
- NIAF's 39th Anniversary Gala, on Oct. 25, 2014, welcomes honors actor, writer and director John Turturro; The Carlyle Group co-founder and chairman Daniel D'Aniello; Google vice president of Public Policy and Government Relations Susan Molinari; and Pino Cicala, founder and editor of AMICO and Antenna Italia Radio-TV.
- NIAF unveils the Italian American Leadership Council (IALC), specifically for Italian Americans taking a shareholder's stake in progressing the Italian American community and NIAF in preserving and promoting the Italian American culture and heritage. NIAF President John M. Viola and Foundation leaders welcome new and returning U.S. Representatives and Senators of the Italian American Congressional Delegation (IACD) at a Capitol Hill reception on March 18, 2015.

- New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, business executives, Italian American community leaders, NIAF friends and supporters gather in Manhattan for the annual New York Spring Gala, on April 8, 2015.
- On April 18, 2015, the NIAF Board of Directors votes to create a special one-time NIAF Emanuele and Emilia Inglese Memorial Grant of \$100,000 to support the "Save the Saint" restoration project by the International Patrons of Duomo di Milano.
- Partnering with The Fondazione "Giovanni e Francesca Falcone" and the Fulbright Program in Italy, NIAF announces the Fulbright Fondazione Falcone-NIAF Scholarship in Criminology.
- NIAF in the 21st century: NIAF has awarded hundreds of scholarships each year and contributed more than \$750,000 to the AP Italian Program. ▲

Alice Bernardi contributed to this story.

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NIAF'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY GALA PREVIEW



A Celebration 40 Years in the Making!

Join us October 16-18 for what is sure to be a special and unforgettable weekend of Italian American pride when we celebrate our 40th Anniversary at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, in Washington, D.C.!

The National Italian American Foundation got its start 40 years ago when a dedicated group of leaders of the Italian American community joined together. Their first NIAF Gala Dinner took place at The Washington Hilton and attracted more than 2,000 guests, including such notables as President Gerald Ford, presidential candidate Jimmy Carter, vice-presidential candidate Walter Mondale and 150 Members of Congress. Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post columnist Mary McGrory wrote that “never before in history” had there been “a meeting with such political power present in one room.”

This year, NIAF invites you to join us to commemorate those 40 mission-filled years. By attending the Gala, you'll not only have the time of your life, you'll be supporting NIAF's continuing evolution as the national organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the Italian American heritage, speaking for Italian Americans in the nation's capital, and facilitating positive cultural, commerce and government connections between the United States and Italy. Today, more than ever, the Italian American community is beginning to come together to ensure a promising future...and you can be part of the excitement!

And, especially for longtime and loyal supporters and friends, this is the first year NIAF moves its Anniversary Gala from The Washington Hilton to its new Gala home, the fabulous Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. Don't miss out on experiencing this new and much more accommodating venue!

So, reserve your tickets today! This promises to be a weekend filled with notables, guest stars, distinguished honorees and memorable events! And, more importantly, some of your best friends. The two-day affair will be packed with receptions, Friday night entertainment like never before, wine tastings, a film screening, an all-day Italian festival, and panel discussions, all culminating with NIAF's black-tie 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner on Saturday night. Oh, and there is the After Gala Party you won't want to miss.

Proceeds benefit NIAF's educational programs. For tickets or sponsor information, contact Jerry Jones at 202-387-0600 or jerry@niaf.org. For more information and to register online, visit www.niaf.org/gala.



Hosts with the Most Are Back!

Returning for their third consecutive year to cohost the 40th Anniversary Gala Awards Dinner will be NIAF's dynamic duo, the remarkable Maria Bartiromo, Fox News anchor and Global Markets editor; and the irrepressible Joe Piscopo, comedian and actor, entertainer, radio host, and NIAF Celebrity Ambassador! If you were at last year's Gala, or the one before that, you know the high-octane energy these two great Italian Americans bring to our celebration. If you weren't, here's your chance!

Joe Piscopo and Friends

Celebrate Frank Sinatra's 100th Birthday!



Join NIAF for a Friday night show with Joe Piscopo and friends as we celebrate Frank Sinatra's 100th Birthday! Experience the spirit of the Rat Pack with "Saturday Night Live" legend Joe Piscopo as he's joined by international singing sensation Il Volo and other special musical guests crooning straight out of the Sinatra Songbook!

The powerhouse pop opera Il Volo, featuring tenors Piero Barone and Ignazio Boschetto, and baritone Gianluca Ginoble, will be performing this evening and during the Gala Weekend.

Dance the night away! Sing-alongs! Music late into the night! Meet renowned mixologist Gina Chersevani, owner of Buffalo and Bergen, who along with an all-star roster of the nation's top Italian American bartenders, will create signature NIAF Italian-inspired cocktails for the evening, available at four mixing stations.

And don't forget to look over the selection of great silent auction items and bid on once-in-a-lifetime live auction opportunities, including trips to Italy!

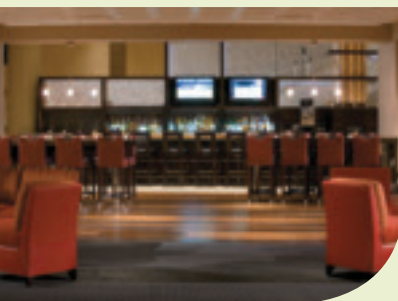
This is one rollicking good time you definitely don't want to miss! It's a ticketed event and open to the public, so we're expecting a full house. Make your reservations now! Doors will open at 9 p.m.; show starts at 9:30 p.m. For more information, 202-939-3100 or buy tickets online at www.niaf.org/40.

But wait! Before the show, check out NIAF's Dine Around roster of nearby excellent restaurants offering "Joe Piscopo & Friends" ticketholders special dinner prices to kick the night off right! For a listing of participating restaurants, visit www.niaf.org/40.



Such a Thing as a Free Lunch!

For the second consecutive Gala weekend, NIAF's amazing partner, the world-famous Mike's Deli, direct from Arthur Avenue in the Bronx, N.Y., will provide an old-fashioned sandwich lunch! For Free! As a way of saying thank you to our supporters and friends, NIAF guests will receive a ticket for this complementary lunch on Saturday afternoon.

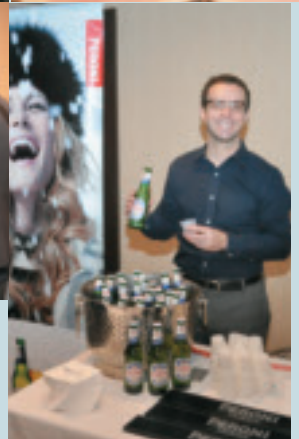


Expo Italiana

Showcasing the best of Italy! Expo Italiana is shaping up to be the largest Italian festival in the nation's capital and one of the largest on the east Coast!

The Expo is FREE and open to the public so gather your family and friends and spend the weekend seeing, smelling and tasting Italy. Besides an indoor bocce court inviting some friendly competition, the Expo will feature high-end cars, live music, singing, dancing, and lots of samples and tastings. Vendors, ranging from Peroni and Lavazza to Amina Rubinacci and the Gaiola Fashion Group, will be on hand showcasing their Italian and Italian American products. Learn about Italian dual citizenship, genealogy, language and travel programs, and visit the NIAF Exhibit of Italian American Culture and a photographic exhibit showcasing life in Southern Italy.

For Gala guests, Expo Italiana will be the go-to place to hang out on Saturday afternoon, the place to meet and mingle and feel at home. No registration necessary, no tickets to buy, just show up and enjoy!





NIAF'S
40TH ANNIVERSARY
GALA PREVIEW



Special Film Screening

Produced by RAI Italia, this Friday afternoon screening of the documentary "Il Viaggio dell'altra Italia," ("The Tale of the Other Italy"), directed by Luigi Maria Perotti, tells the tale of Italian emigration through its most popular destination countries and local Italian Emigration Museums. It's a journey through entry ports which become memorial sites. The Italian Emigration Museums around the world, their objects, pictures and documents have a central role in creating and preserving a collective imagination shared by Italian expatriates, their descendants and Italians living in Italy.



The screening is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Reservation are not required but to reserve a seat, call Stephanie Gordon at 202-939-3107.

Annual Wine Tasting

Join us for this incredibly popular tasting as a knowledgeable and entertaining sommelier leads you through a variety exceptional traditional and modern wines from Italy. This sit-down tasting with light antipasti served is a ticketed event and open to the public, so we're expecting a full house. Buy your tickets now at the Gala registration page at www.niaf.org/40.



**Ieri,
Oggi,
Domani
Breakfast
with
Special
Guests**

Bring your thoughts and opinions to this lively annual "State of the Community" discussion with NIAF leaders and special guests. Complimentary continental breakfast provided. This event is free and open to the public, but limited seating.

**Reserve Your Room Now at the
Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel**

NIAF will be hosting its 40th Anniversary Gala weekend for the first time ever at The Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, one of the premier hotels in the nation's capital, located at 2660 Woodley Rd NW, Washington, D.C. We're excited about the great accommodations, classy ballroom and spacious exhibition area!

Join your friends and support our efforts by booking your room(s) within our room block at the Washington Hilton for some of the best rates in town. Book your reservation at www.niaf.org/40 or call the hotel at 1-800-228-9290 and ask for a "NIAF room block" reservation.



Conferences Galore!

The Italian American Studies Association (IASA) will hold numerous panel-discussion sessions throughout the Gala Weekend that are free and open to the public. Among the topics: "Italian American Cinema: Food as Agent in Italian American Culture;" "Death: Italian American Style;" and "Women, Family, and Italian Values."

NIAF will also hold a special "NIAF on Campus" Conference that will include 20 of NIAF's Italian American Fellows-focusing on best practices and strategies to bring NIAF to college campuses across the nation.



And, NIAF Board member Dr. Antonio Giordano will present "All About the Eyes," a medical conference on common eye conditions and how to manage them with current medical, surgical and the newest "cutting edge" technologies.

These conferences are free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.niaf.org/40.



And When the Gala's Over...

Don't turn out the lights! Late nighters and partiers won't want to miss The NIAF After Hours Party! Untie your black tie after the Gala and join in the most famous Italian party in America, featuring live music and spirited sing-alongs.

This is an after party not to be missed!



Sunday Morning Mass

Catholic Mass in Italian celebrated by Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D., at the Holy Rosary Church in downtown Washington. This beautiful church was established in 1913 to serve the Italian immigrants who first lived in its neighborhood. It is the Italian National Parish of Washington, D.C. Shuttle service provided.

For more information about the NIAF 40th Anniversary Gala, please contact us at 202-387-0600 or visit www.niaf.org/40 today!

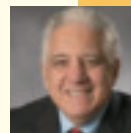


NIAF's Toasts Distinguished Honorees

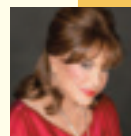
This year's honorees exemplify Italian and Italian American achievement at its finest! NIAF's 2015 Gala honorees:



Amato L. Berardi
founder of Berardi & Associates Inc., and former member of the Italian Parliament



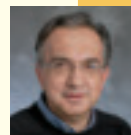
Richard E. Caruso
founder and chairman of Integra Life Sciences



Connie Francis
Italian American musical legend



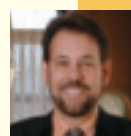
Mario Gabelli
founder, chairman and CEO of GAMCO Investors Inc.



Sergio Marchionne
CEO of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles N.V.



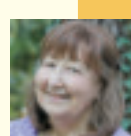
Franco Nuschese
president of Georgetown Entertainment Group LLC



Steve Perillo
president and owner of Perillo Tours



Alfred M. Rotondaro
senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and former NIAF Executive Director



Dr. Josephine J. Templeton
philanthropist

Visit www.niaf.org/gala for updates on honorees, special guests and celebrities attending the Gala, and for more information on purchasing tickets, sponsoring the gala and becoming part of NIAF's 40th Anniversary Gala and Convention.

Gala photos by Kenneth Rictor Photography

NIAF'S NEW YORK GALA

New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo joined the more than 500 guests, business executives, Italian American community leaders, and NIAF friends and supporters in Manhattan for the Foundation's annual New York Spring Gala on April 8, 2015.

Under the towering marble columns at the Italian Renaissance-inspired Cipriani 42nd Street, guests sipped Bellini cocktails and viewed the silent auction's sports memorabilia, fine jewelry and designer women's purses on display before dinner.

"Tonight we celebrate NIAF's 40th Anniversary..." said NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso in his welcome message, before unveiling the Italian American Leadership Council (IALC) for those interested in committing themselves to being leaders and stakeholders in NIAF and the future of the Italian American community.

Gov. Cuomo presented the inaugural Mario M. Cuomo Award in Public Service to Westchester County, N.Y., District Attorney Janet DiFiore. Named for the Governor's father, the late New York governor, the award recognizes Italian American public servants known for their passion, conviction and dedication to

servicing the Italian American community. "My father was dedicated to represent the best of the Italian American people and he wanted to model the best of the Italian American culture," Cuomo said.

Following a few words from the podium by New York Gala dinner chairman Gerard S. LaRocca, a member of NIAF's Board and the IALC, was this year's master of ceremonies, Chazz Palminteri, Academy-Award nominated actor and writer. "As you may recall, I, too was a NIAF New York Gala honoree in the recent past," Palminteri said. "This is a great organization that does a great deal for the Italian American community."

As Christina Carlucci sang the U.S. national anthem and Italy's national anthem, guests dined on Italian specialties, including thinly sliced prosciutto with fresh mozzarella, and roasted pear and frisee salad.



NIAF Regional Vice President Susan Paolercio and NIAF President John M. Viola



Gala Emcee Chazz Palminteri congratulates dual father-and-son award in real estate honorees Edward A. Riguardi and his son Peter G. Riguardi



NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, and Milan (Italy) lawyer and Andrea Gemma, director of Eni, the Italian energy group,



NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso, New York Gala dinner chairman Gerard S. LaRocca, honoree Westchester County District Attorney Janet DiFiore, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, and NIAF President John M. Viola



Gov. Andrew Cuomo



Alfio entertains the Gala crowd.

Palminteri opened the awards ceremony with a posthumous honor for WABC 7's Emmy Award-winning reporter Lisa Colagrossi, whose sudden passing in mid-March greatly affected New York's Italian American community. WABC-TV's Eyewitness News This Morning and Eyewitness News at Noon anchor Ken Rosato, who accepted the award Colagrossi's behalf, was also honored.

A dual father-and-son award in real estate was presented to Edward A. Riguardi, for his 50-plus-year career in commercial real estate as managing director in the New York Transaction Group of Jones Lang LaSalle, and to his son Peter G. Riguardi, president of the New York region of Jones Lang LaSalle.

"These five honorees and their stories are a testament to why we gathered here tonight and telling their stories is the

core of NIAF's mission," Palminteri added.

NIAF President and Chief Operating Officer John M. Viola introduced special guest Piero Corsini, director of RAI World, who spoke and showed a video about the new initiatives the media company has launched to showcase Italians and Italian Americans in Italy and abroad.

Also attending the Gala were Italy's Consul General in New York Natalia Quintavalle; actor Ralph George Macchio Jr., best known for his roles in the "Karate Kid," and "My Cousin Vinny"; Miss New York Jillian Tapper; TV news host Tom Murro; athletic director at Sacred Heart University and former manager of the New York Mets Bobby Valentine; and NIAF's vice presidents in the Greater New York region Susan Paolercio and Nicholas R. Caiazzo.

Several representatives and dig-

nitaries from Italy's Lombardy region, the NIAF 2015 Region of Honor, were present. Earlier that day, they gave an overview of Expo Milano 2015 during a NIAF - IALC Leadership Forum at the offices of Pepper Hamilton LLP, at The New York Times Building.

Italian Australian vocalist Alfio closed the Gala festivities with the melodramatic Italian ballad "Il Mondo."

The NIAF New York Spring Gala proceeds support the Foundation's philanthropic and educational programs. NIAF thanks this year's Presenting Sponsors Jones Lang LaSalle and the Viola Foundation Inc.



Simone Crolla, AmCham Italy's Managing Director; Valentina Aprea, Education, Training and Employment Assessor of Regione Lombardia; NIAF President John M. Viola; and Natalia Quintavalle, Italian Consul General in New York at the NIAF - IALC Leadership Forum



Actor Ralph George Macchio Jr., NIAF Board member Dr. John P. Rosa, and Gala emcee and actor Chazz Palminteri



WABC-TV news anchor and Gala honoree Ken Rosato being interviewed

NIAF Executive Vice President Ken Aspromonte, Lorri Aspromonte, Alma Laias and NIAF Vice Chairman Salvatore Salibello with silent auction Sports memorabilia in background



NIAF Headquarters Screens "The Italian Americans"

After previewing parts of the highly acclaimed, WETA-produced, PBS documentary "The Italian Americans" across the country over several months, on February 23, NIAF brought the film home for wine-and-cheese reception and screening of its first two parts at NIAF Headquarters at the Ambassador Peter F. Secchia Building in Washington, D.C.



Chiara Sanni Rich, who won the 2014 NIAF Photo Contest, and chef, author and TV personality Amy Riolo



NIAF President John M. Viola, classical singer Donato Soranno and AMICO editor Pino Cicala



NIAF Director of Programs Gabriella Mileti, CNN editor Tia Brueggeman, and NIAF Executive Assistant to the President Stephanie Gordon



The film's Executive Producer Jeff Bieber, Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society President Maria D'Andrea, and NIAF President John M. Viola

Feeding the Planet Symposium

In the spirit of Expo Milano 2015's theme, "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life," NIAF proudly co-sponsored Miami Dade College's conference on March 12, "America and the Old World: Food, Health and Culture."

Guest panelists at the college's historic Freedom Tower in Miami included chef, TV host, author, and restaurateur Lidia Bastianich; chef, restaurateur and author Scott Conant; chef and restaurant owner Giorgio Rapicavoli; International Culinary Center founder and CEO Dorothy Cann Hamilton; James Beard Foundation Executive Vice President Mitchell Davis; renowned Italian restaurateur and author of "Italian Cuisine: Basic Cooking Techniques" Tony May; and Expo Milano 2015 Director Piero Galli.

During the conference's VIP Awards Luncheon, NIAF Vice Chair Patricia de Stacy Harrison presented Lidia Bastianich with the Food for Life award.

Elissa Ruffino



NIAF General Counsel and Conference Chairman Arthur J. Furia, NIAF Vice Chair Patricia de Stacy Harrison, NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso, chef and honoree Lidia Bastianich, and NIAF President John M. Viola



Miami Mayor Tomás Regalado, Miami Dade College Wolfson Campus President Dr. José A. Vicente, Italy's Consul General in Miami Adolfo Barattolo (holding Italy's proclamation naming the conference the official U.S. pre-launch event for the World's Fair in Milan), Italy's Councilor for Agriculture for the Region of Lombardia Gianni Fava, Conference Chairman Arthur J. Furia, and Ambassador Peter T. Reeker, currently U.S. consul general in Milan

St. Joseph's Table at NIAF

On March 19, NIAF welcomed members, friends and the public for a traditional St. Joseph's Table open house. Guests were encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to benefit Little Sisters of the Poor and other area charities, and enjoy fresh zeppole, prosciutto, and an assortment of Italian cheeses.



Don Oldenburg

NIAF Welcomes New IACD on Capitol Hill

On March 19, NIAF President John M. Viola, NIAF Government Relations and Public Policy Committee Chair Mark Valente III, and members of NIAF leadership welcomed new and returning U.S. Representatives and Senators of the Italian American Congressional Delegation (IACD), plus Foundation IALC members and guests, at a reception at the Amway Townhouse on Capitol Hill.

“NIAF is a great organization, but only as good as what we put into it. Our shared rich Italian heritage and culture is what we celebrate and cherish tonight,” said IACD co-chair Rep. Pat Tiberi.



NIAF Board member Mark Valente III and IACD co-chair Rep. Pat Tiberi

Public Policy Forum Luncheon

On April 14, NIAF hosted members of Congress, Italian American Leadership Council (IALC) members, and other dignitaries at a private luncheon and the first in a series of 2015 NIAF- Frank J. Guarini Public Policy Forums on Capitol Hill. The keynote speaker Rep. Tom Marino spoke of his Italian roots and growing up Italian American, as well as anti-trust, telecommunications and internet sales tax.



NIAF member Joseph D. Lonardo, NIAF Vice Chair Gabriel A. Battista, Lido Civic Club President Francesco Isgrò, and Pino Cicala



Rep. Mark Amodei, Rep. John Shimkus, NIAF Board member Anita Bevacqua McBride, former congressman Mike Ferguson, Rep. Doug LaMalfa, and NIAF President John M. Viola

Photos by Gabriella Milieti

Mission to Palermo

NIAF President John M. Viola led a delegation of the Foundation’s Board to Palermo, Italy, from May 20-24, to introduce a new partnership with the U.S.-Italy Fulbright Commission and the Fondazione Giovanni e Francesca Falcone. Through the partnership, scholarships will be available to university graduate students to conduct research in criminology, to strengthen exchanges to promote the value of the rule of law, and to promote anti-mafia culture.

To honor the memory of Judge Giovanni Falcone and Francesca Falcone, NIAF’s leadership, including NIAF Board members Dr. John P. Rosa and Charles Turano, joined Professor Maria Falcone, Giovanni Falcone’s sister, in Palermo at a commemoration ceremony on May 23.



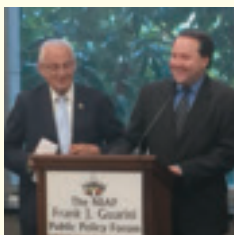
NIAF President John M. Viola with Pietro Grasso, Italian anti-mafia magistrate and president of the Italian Senate, in the Aula Bunker at the Ucciardone Jail in Palermo

Keynote speaker Rep. Tom Marino



NIAF Government Relations and Public Policy Committee Chair Mark Valente III, former Rep. Mike Ferguson, NIAF President John M. Viola, Rep. John Mica, Italian Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero, Rep. John Marino, and Rep. Mark Amodei

Representatives Pat Tiberi and Bill Pascrell, co-chairmen of the Italian American Congressional Delegation, welcomed more than 100 guests.



Rep. Virginia Foxx comments during the luncheon



Photos by Gabriella Milieti



NIAF Board member Mark Valente III, NIAF Vice Chair Patricia de Stacy Harrison, NEH Chairman William D. Adams, Executive Producer of “The Italian Americans” Jeff Bieber, and former Rep. Mike Ferguson

Celebrating “The Italian Americans” Documentary

National Endowment of the Humanities Chairman William D. Adams gave the keynote address at the NIAF-Frank J. Guarini Public Policy Forum at a Capitol Hill luncheon on June 2 celebrating the acclaimed NEH-supported PBS documentary series “The Italian Americans” and Italy’s national holiday, Festa della Repubblica.

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Bella Vagnoni, NIAF President
John M. Viola and NIAF
Treasurer Robert E. Carlucci



NIAF's Congressional Bocce Ball Tournament

If it's NIAF's spring fling with bocce on Capitol Hill, it means stormy weather. For the third straight year, due to rain, NIAF's Congressional Bocce Ball Tournament, on June 1, moved indoors at the offices of sponsor Venable LLP in downtown Washington. Members of Congress, NIAF IALC leaders and guests paired off for some good natured match-ups mixed with political conversation while celebrating their Italian heritage.



NIAF Board members
Joseph D. Lonardo and
Mark Valente III



Bocce photos by Don Oldenburg

Right, NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso; former U.S. Rep. Ron Klink; NIAF President John M. Viola; U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell; U.S. Rep. Pat Tiberi; U.S. Rep. Michael Capuano; U.S. Rep. John Larson; NIAF Board member Mark Valente III; U.S. Rep. Joe Heck; and NIAF Treasurer Robert E. Carlucci

Honors at Villa Firenze

On July 14, Italy's Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero bestowed the prestigious Order of the Merit of the Italian Republic to NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso and NIAF Board member Frank Giordano during a private ceremony at Villa Firenze in Washington, D.C., for their work in fostering greater relationships between Italy and the United States.



Elissa Ruffino

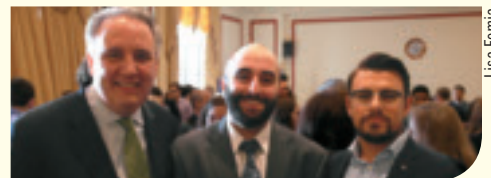


Elissa Ruffino

Top, Ambassador Bisogniero presents Joseph V. Del Raso with the Order of the Merit of the Italian Republic. Above, Frank Giordano and his wife Dorothy Giordano, Italian Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero and his wife Laura Denise Noce Benigni Olivieri, and NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso and his wife Anne Del Raso.

NIAF Wine Tasting for Capitol Hill Staffers

More than 200 Capitol Hill staffers turned out for NIAF's Wine-Off Tasting to inaugurate the new Italian American Congressional Staff Association (IACSA) at the Rayburn House Office Building on July 30. Guests moved from table to table judging American and Italian sparkling, red, white and dessert wines.



Lisa Femia

NIAF Executive Vice President John F. Calvelli, IACSA President Geoff Browning and NIAF President John M. Viola

Final tally of votes? The Italian wines swept the election!



Gabriella Milet

Former Congressional staffer and NIAF Executive Vice President John F. Calvelli, NIAF Manager of Public Policy Lisa Femia, and IACSA founder Ivana Brancaccio

Scholarship winner
Andrea Petri



Alex Benedetto



Organizers of NIAF's annual honor the driving force behind the New York Golf Tournament, NIAF Regional Vice President Nicholas Caiazzo.

NIAF's New York Golf Tournament

NIAF's 11th Annual New York Golf Tournament teed off on August 10 at the Old Westbury Golf & Country Club in Old Westbury, N.Y. The tournament benefits the Foundation's scholarship and educational programs for the New York area.

Mission to Italy

NIAF's Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso and President John M. Viola led a delegation of the Foundation's executive committee and the members of the Italian American Leadership Council (IALC) to Italy June 21- 28. Meeting with board members, business leaders and government officials, the mission traveled to Lombardia, the 2015 Region of Honor, to discuss key issues influencing cultural, economic and diplomatic relations between Italy and the United States.

During the trip, the delegation met with the President of the Region of Lombardy Roberto Maroni at Belvedere di Palazzo Lombardia to commemorate NIAF's \$100,000 grant to restore the statue of the first American Saint, Frances Xavier Cabrini, at the Duomo in Milan; visited places along Lake Maggiore, including St. Giulio Island and Orta Lake; toured Stresa; and took boat excursions to Isola Bella and Isola dei Pescatori. Before leaving Milan, the group enjoyed an evening performance of Giacomo Puccini's opera, "Tosca," at Teatro La Scala, the world-renowned opera house.

All photos by Gabriella Milieti



The NIAF Board and IALC delegation with the 2015 Ambassador Peter F. Secchia Voyage of Discovery students at the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana in Milan

The delegation ready to go for a scenic tour of Lake Orta



Ambassador Phillip T. Reeker, U.S. Consul General in Milan, with the NIAF delegation, congratulating his in-house chef at his residence.



NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso finds a street sign at Sacro Monte on Lake Orta that he likes. Pasta!



NIAF Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso, NIAF President John M. Viola, Valentina Aprea, President of Regione Lombardia Roberto Maroni, and Monsignor Gianantonio Borgonovo at the Regione Lombardia offices



Some of the NIAF contingent enjoying the view at Sacro Monte on Lake Orta: NIAF Treasurer Robert E. Carlucci, Board member Frank Giordano; Chairman Joseph V. Del Raso; Executive Vice President Kenneth J. Aspromonte; Board member Gerard S. LaRocca; and Vice Chairman Gabriel S. Battista.



NIAF President John M. Viola cruising with the delegation on Lake Orta with St. Giulio Island in background

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NIAF AND PERILLO TOURS

**Steve Perillo
2015 NIAF 40th Anniversary
Honoree**

Celebrating 70 years of excellence in travel to Italy! Perillo Tours: An Italian American Institution!



Perillo Tours was born in 1945 when Italian American immigrant Joseph Perillo opened a small storefront under the Third Avenue El in the Bronx. Perillo Tours was continued by Mario Perillo (better known as “Mr. Italy”), who perfected the art of affordable luxury travel programs to Italy and developed a strong awareness of the Italian American community.

Presently under the direction Steve Perillo, Perillo’s third generation, the company remains committed to creating once in a lifetime journeys to Italy through Perillo Tours’ fully escorted tours, Perillo Tours custom groups and ItalyVacations.com.



Join NIAF and Perillo Tours on a once in a lifetime Italian vacation experience. Enjoy the country’s dramatic highlights including history, culture and cuisine. Packages are available for individual and group travel, destination weddings and honeymoons, and tailored escorted tours. We look forward to introducing you to authentic Italy!

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800-ITALY-25
Perillo Custom Groups
855-PT-Group 855-784-7687
groups@perillotours.com

For NIAF Members Only:
Book any Perillo Tours or ItalyVacations.com program (a \$2,500 value per couple) and receive \$100 per person.
Promo Code: NIAF

CALENDAR

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

NIAF is offering the following special events in the coming months. For more information, visit niaf.org.

**OCTOBER 2015
NIAF 40th Anniversary
Awards Gala Weekend**

Date: October 16-18, 2015
Location: Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
Contact: Andrea Bartlett at 202-939-3118 or abartlett@niaf.org

**Fulbright-Fondazione
Falcone-NIAF Scholarship in
Criminology application**

To Apply: <http://www.fulbright.it>
Deadline: October 13, 2015
Contact: Cecilia Niccoli Vallesi, program officer, Fulbright Commission at cniccoli@fulbright.it

**NOVEMBER 2015
2016 NIAF Ambassador
Peter F. Secchia
Voyage of Discovery
Program Application**

Date: November 2, 2015
To Apply: online at www.niaf.org/voyageofdiscovery
Contact: Gabriella Mileti at 202-939-3116 or gmileti@niaf.org

**DECEMBER 2015
NIAF 2016-2017 Scholar-
ship Applications**

To Apply: online at www.niaf.org/scholarships
Date: December 1, 2015
Contact: Gabriella Mileti at 202-939-3116 or scholarships@niaf.org

**JANUARY 2016
Application Deadline for
the 2016 NIAF Ambassador
Peter F. Secchia Voyage
of Discovery Program**

Date: January 31, 2016
Time: 11:59 p.m. EST
Contact: Gabriella Mileti at 202-939-3116 or gmileti@niaf.org

**MARCH 2016
Application Deadline
for the 2016-2107
NIAF Scholarships**

Date: March 1, 2016
Time: 11:59 p.m. Central
Contact: Gabriella Mileti at 202-939-3116 or gmileti@niaf.org

**APRIL 2016
NIAF New York Spring Gala**

Date: April 28, 2016
Location: Cipriani 42nd Street, 110 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y.
Time: 6:30 p.m. Cocktail Reception; 7:30 p.m. Dinner
Contact: Andrea Bartlett at 202-939-3118 or abartlett@niaf.org



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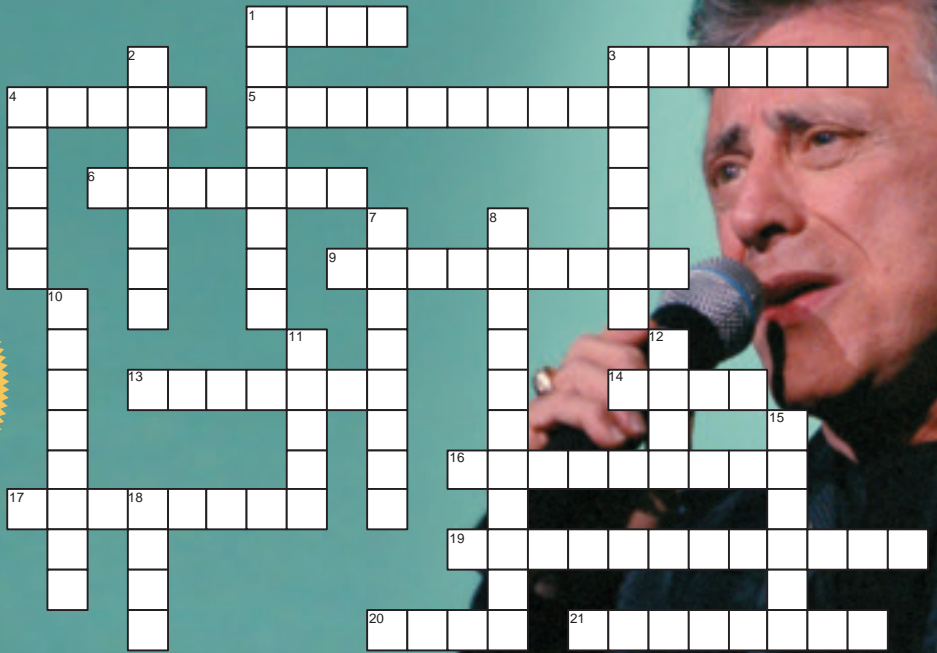
PAST NIAF HONOREES

Italian American Style



Solution

- ACROSS**
- 1 President H.W. Bush, '06, first lady Barbara Bush, '91
 - 3 Frank Sinatra, 1985
 - 4 Lidia Bastianich
 - 5 Janet Napolitano
 - 6 John Paul DeJoria
 - 7 Sister Margherita Marchione, Ph.D.
 - 8 Paul Chiapparone
 - 9 George Randazzo
 - 10 Sophie Loren
 - 11 Frankie Valli
 - 12 Perry Como
 - 16 Luciano Pavarotti
 - 17 Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani
 - 18 Lynx - L'Accademia Nazionale del Lincei
 - 19 Gina Lollobrigida
 - 20 General Peter Pace
- DOWN**
- 1 Sylvester Stallone for Rocky in 1977
 - 2 Liza Minnelli
 - 3 Paul & Mirra Sorvino
 - 4 Sophia Loren
 - 5 Anne Bancroft
 - 6 John DeJoria
 - 7 George Randazzo
 - 8 Paul Chiapparone
 - 9 Sister Margherita Marchione, Ph.D.
 - 10 Sophie Loren
 - 11 Frankie Valli
 - 12 Perry Como
 - 13 Joe Montana
 - 14 Dolores Hope (Bob Hope's wife)
 - 15 Leonard Riggi
 - 16 Luciano Pavarotti
 - 17 Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani
 - 18 Lynx - L'Accademia Nazionale del Lincei
 - 19 Gina Lollobrigida
 - 20 General Peter Pace



by Leon J. Radomile www.leonradomile.com

ACROSS

- 1 The only U.S. President and First Lady to be NIAF honorees.
- 3 Only two persons were lone NIAF honorees. Legendary director Frank Capra was the first so honored in 1983. Who was the second?
- 4 Emmy Award winning television host, author and restaurateur. This '09 honoree's maiden name was Matticchio.
- 5 In 2009, NIAF honored this past governor of Arizona and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security.
- 6 This 2000 NIAF honoree, known for his humanitarian philanthropy, is a rags-to-riches story that exemplifies the American Dream. Think hair.

9 Honored by NIAF in 1984, this internationally known author of 35 books and over 90 articles, dedicated her later years to the defense of Pope Pius XII.

13 Noted for remaining cool under pressure, this 1995 NIAF honoree led his NFL teams to 31 fourth-quarter, come-from-behind wins.

14 Dolores Defina received the NIAF Humanitarian Award in 1986. Married surname?

16 One of the most commercially successful tenors of all time was honored by NIAF in 2007.

17 "Change is not a destination, just as hope is not a strategy."

- 7 Who was this 2007 honoree? In 2013, she sold her jewelry collection, and donated nearly \$5 million from the sale to benefit stem-cell therapy research. In 2008, she received NIAF's Lifetime Achievement Award.
- 8 Former U.S. Marine Corps general who served as the 16th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Of Pulian descent, was honored by NIAF for his military service in 2005.
- 21 Honored in 1991, he was nominated for two Academy Awards, Best Original Screenplay and Best Actor, and became the third man in history to receive these two nominations for the same film.

DOWN

- 1 Anna Maria Italiano was an award-winning actor garnering one Oscar, two Tonys, two Emmys, two Golden Globes and three BAFTA awards. Entered NIAF's Italian American Hall of Fame in 2006.
- 2 NIAF's Performing Arts honoree in 1988, she won an Oscar as best actress in this 1972 musical.
- 3 A NIAF honoree in 2013, he followed his daughter, an Oscar-winning Harvard grad who was a NIAF honoree in 1996.
- 4 Signora Scicolone has been honored by NIAF three times. First

- to win an Oscar for a foreign-language performance.
- 7 This honoree founded the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame. More than 230 inductees have been enshrined and the organization has raised more than \$6 million for charitable causes.
- 8 Honored for his Humanitarian Service by NIAF in 2002. In 1979, he and a colleague were rescued from Iran after the Shah was deposed. The rescue was portrayed in a book and a TV miniseries "On the Wings of Eagles."
- 10 Margaret J. Giannini was NIAF's first woman honoree in 1980. What was her field of expertise?
- 11 Born Francesco Castelluccio in N.J. This popular singer, known for his powerful falsetto voice, had 29 Top-40 hits with his group and nine Top-40 hits as a solo artist. NIAF honoree in 2006.
- 12 "50 years of music and a life well lived." He joined Henry Mancini as a NIAF honoree in 1987.
- 15 A major proponent of literacy, he served as executive chairman of book store chain Barnes & Noble. Honored by NIAF in 1998.
- 18 First organization (science) to be honored by NIAF. It takes its name from this animal whose vision symbolizes observational prowess.

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