

Volume 6
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Summer 2023

Il Giornale

Newsletter for the Grand Lodge of Virginia
Order Sons & Daughters of Italy in America

*A note from the
Editor:*

***Benvenuta
estate!***

I write to you all just after coming off our Biennial Convention and 100th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Hopefully, it was an enjoyable experience for all those who attended and if you were unable to attend, you perused the special Il Giornale convention edition with all the highlights of the weekend. Please be safe and enjoy your summer vacation time with family and friends, whether near or far. I look forward to hearing from our brothers and sisters who wish to keep everyone informed of current lodge news. Please submit articles and pictures to:

colette.sciscilo@gmail.com

A note from the Grand Lodge President

Cari amici,

Brothers and Sisters, first of all, let me say how very proud I am to say that I am President of the Grand Lodge of VA. I actually tear up just thinking about how proud my parents and grandparents would be if I was able to tell them that I am the State President. I'm doing this for them. They were all OSIA (now OSDIA) members for many, many years. They have passed the torch to me and I promise I will do everything in my power to see it passes to the next generation.

I enter my term with some fear and a lot of hope. Fear, because I hope I can live up to the expectations of the membership. I have some big shoes to fill as my predecessors all did a wonderful job representing the Virginia lodges. I believe I am up to the challenge, but it will take a team effort to make it happen. As for hope, I'm hopeful that the future will be filled with new and exciting ideas especially in the area of new memberships and retention of current members. As we all know, attracting younger members has been the challenge. Reaching them "where they live", such places like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, is the key. I know personally I'm not into all that stuff, but I guess I can learn or at least find someone that does understand those mediums and is willing to coordinate their use for the Good of the Order. Let's all pray that that person is out there just waiting to help us.

Very soon, August 15-19, I will be attending the National Convention in Tampa. I'm excited to be a part of this event. I'm looking forward to meeting OSDIA members from all over the country to share ideas and make new friends. However, Tampa in August wouldn't have been my first choice. Guess I'll pack an extra can of deodorant. Maybe the next convention will be in Minnesota in January. Anyway, it will be fun and I look forward to bringing back some new ideas to share with the membership.

In the coming months I plan to visit the lodges to get to know everyone better and to see how they operate. To also understand what works for them and how we can share that with the other lodges. I know we have the quarterly Grand Lodge meetings where we discuss these things, but it is always better to see it in person.

God Bless you all,
Aldo Funai
Grand Lodge President

Local Lodges

Giuseppe Verdi Lodge

MARCH – JUNE 2023

(Submitted by Mary Louise Smith)

This first quarter of “Life in the Italian Lane” at Giuseppe Verdi Lodge has been a little slow in “highlights” for the lodge as we had been adjusting to new officers and devoting our attention to the 38th Biennial and 100th Grand Lodge convention. Our member, John DeMaio, gave us the pleasure of his organ playing music after our luncheon in March! Workday took place in May sprucing up our building with the assistance of a handful of members along with the young ones from Freddy C’s boxing team giving us a hand. Thank goodness for these young folks. And a luncheon was prepared for the workers by Freddy C which is always enjoyable. Of course in June, it was the celebration of Flag Day and sing along with “The Star Spangled Banner”, as we proudly waved our Fan Flags on High!!



Italian Heritage Lodge

(Submitted by Coletta Sciscilo)

In the past few months IHL members, families and guests have enjoyed various activities in the beautiful Spring weather here in Northern Virginia. In March, GLVA President Larry Brennan visited IHL and presided over our 2023-2024 Installation of Officers Ceremony and Dinner. Our members were grateful that Larry made the trip up our way as we know that was a busy time for him. Not to be outdone though Larry, the Installation evening continued as we welcomed and honored Bishop Emeritus Paul S. Loverde of the Arlington diocese. Bishop Loverde was truly an amazing presence as he visited with all our members, blessed our meal and the St. Joseph Table, and presented us with a wonderful talk. The Bishop was thrilled to be able to fluently speak at length with our Italian speaking members and meet so many of our members. We rounded out the next months with a terrific guest speaker, Dan Piazza, who presented us with a fascinating lecture on “Stamps of the Vatican”, our “Italian Bingo” night in May, “Bocce at the Lillo’s” in early June, and members attended “Italian Heritage Day” at National’s Stadium in late June. The IHL “Cena e Conversazione” Italian language group continues to meet monthly, and it is going strong. The 38th Biennial Convention in Virginia Beach ended with IHL committing to hosting the 39th Biennial Convention in 2025!



Italian Heritage Lodge of Fairfax, Installation of 2023-2024 Officers

Front Row: President Dawn Falsinotti, Vice President Charles Romano, Orator Joseph Scafetta, Jr., Recording Secretary Marianne Hallahan, Treasurer Dennis Lillo, Financial Secretary Eleanor Lillo.

Back Row: Trustees John Dovel, Carol Cassella, Vivian Mott, and Nancy Perrelli, Guard Michael Gering, Mistress of Ceremony Sandy Schender, Master of Ceremony Roy Schender.



Bishop Emeritus Paul S. Loverde, Arlington Diocese,
honored at our Installation Dinner and Ceremony.



Daniel A. Piazza,
 Chief Curator
 of the National
 Postal Museum,
 Washington,
 DC



Our annual "Bocce at the Lillo's" picnic and tournament, hosted by Ellie and Dennis Lillo.



Italian Heritage Day at National's Stadium.



Roma Lodge

(Submitted by Marie Siebeking)



Roma Lodge #254 Installation - March 5, 2023

Left to Right: Pres: Marie Mascaro Siebeking, Guard: Rick Langlands, Vice Pres: John Presto, Immed. Past Pres: Tony Alfano, Trustee: Bud Merrit, Orator: John Iluzzi, Trustee: Dono Gambino, Recording Sec: Flo Alfano, Trustee: Lola Mussaro, Financial Sec: Ellie Bove, Trustee: Cheryl Presto, Treasurer: Peter Langlands
State Orator/Presiding Official: Paul Siebeking, State Financial Sec/Herald: John Gossner



Roma Lodge#254 Luncheon for Veterans May 7, 2023

Veterans from the Vets Houses in Virginia and the Director Senior Chief Smith and his Executive Assistant Michelle Stallings Attended. Pres: Marie Mascaro Siebeking, Presented a quilt She made to Smitty.

There are 4 houses and one duplex, which is the housing for Female Veterans. Senior Chief, USN (Ret.) Smith has rules for Homeless vets to live in the houses: no smoking, no drugs or alcohol are allowed, everyone living there must work or go to school. If you don't abide by the rules, you move out. Smitty said it works. His Executive assistant, Michelle Stallings is his right-hand helper. Pres. Marie Siebeking presented Senior Chief Smith with a quilt she made; he was speechless.

Peninsula Italian American Lodge

(Submitted by Beverly Amante)

Members of PIAL 2145 met at the James River Country Club on Saturday, March 11, 2023 for the installation of the new officers for 2023. Our member, Gloria Gori, was in charge of finding a place for the installation event. Gloria reserved a room at the country club where we had a buffet lunch which included an antipasto salad, Chicken Marsala, pasta, soup, veggies, and dessert. Everyone was pleased with the meal and especially the beautiful view of the James River from our dining room.

Outgoing President, Beverly Amante, welcomed members and guests to the installation. The Installation ceremony was conducted by State President, Larry Brennan, with the help of Herald, Bob Amante, and assistant Heralds, Paul & Marie Siebeking. The following are the PIAL officers for 2023.

President	Briana Taravella Robison	Guard	Stasi Wipperman
Vice President	Mary Dolores Ciraulo	Master of Ceremony	Robert Amato
Past President	Beverly Amante	Trustee	Betty Dexter
Recording Secretary	Michello Romanello	Trustee	Lee Jamilik
Financial Secretary	Terry DeLucia	Trustee	Marie Wynne
Treasurer	Jim DeLucia	Trustee	Barbara Martone Jamilik
Orator	Barry Robison	Trustee	Robbin Ciraulo



Back Row: Larry Brennan, Bob Amante, Stasi Wipperman, Michelle Romanello, Barbara Jamilik, Lee Jamilik, Terry DeLucia, Jim DeLucia, Robbin Ciraulo, Paul Siebeking.

Front Row: Marie Wynne, Briana Robison, Mary Dolores Ciraulo, Betty Dexter, Marie Siebeking.

Missing from photo: Barry Robison and Bob Amato

Peninsula Italian American Lodge

Pictures from our Installation



Outgoing President, Beverly Amante, receives two gifts from the lodge. One, a bottle of wine (how appropriate!). The second gift was something that made her cry. As some of you know, Bev has been doing the PIAL newsletter, "the EDICOLA" for many years. One of the lodge members, Michelle Romanello, had almost all of the newsletters bound by year for a keepsake.



The view of the James River from our dining room.



Members and guests chat before the meeting begins.

Two of our officers were unable to attend the March Installation so they were installed at our April Meeting. They are Barry Robison (in black shirt) and Bob Amato (in blue shirt).



The Robert A. Facchina Italian-American Museum of Washington, DC

(Contributed by James Cocco, Joseph Scafetta, Jr. and Coletta Sciscilo)

A must see on anyone's vacation destination list is the Italian-American Museum of Washington, DC, ("IAMDC") situated within the premises of the historic Holy Rosary Church, the national Italian parish, and the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center and Language School, and located at 229 F Street NW (near Third Street). Flags of the United States, Italy, the Vatican, and Washington, DC, welcome visitors to IAMDC as they walk through the doors to experience the Italian and Italian-American presence in Washington, DC.

The mission of the museum is to honor the legacy of Italians and Italian-Americans in the Nation's Capital, to preserve its history and to celebrate its cultural heritage. IAMDC is supported and managed by the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center, Inc., a nonprofit organization created in 2017 with the mission of presenting and supporting educational and cultural activities of the local Italian-American community. Casa Italiana has awarded its inaugural Italian Legacy Research Grants to five area university students for the purpose of engaging students to do further research into the contributions of Italian and Italian-Americans to the Nation's Capital.

In 2020, the museum opened its doors, made possible through a generous grant from entrepreneur and philanthropist Robert A. Facchina. The Marconi Project, still in progress, is an exhibit on Italian immigration to Washington, DC, intended to explore the lives, struggles and achievements of Italian immigrants through a compilation of oral histories that visitors will be able to access. Visitors can also discover the Italians behind the design, construction, and beautification of the city, reflect on the creation and evolution of historic Holy Rosary Church and Casa Italiana, and celebrate the works of local Italian and Italian-American artists as they continue the traditions of their ancestors.

Visitors can contact IAMDC by telephone: 202-643-9514, by email: info@casaitalianacenter.org and by website: casaitalianacenter.org Tours are offered by appointment only. Donations to support the museum are requested at the end of the tours.

*"It's important for us as Italian Americans to remember the stories,
to remember the people who came before us and on whose shoulders we stand."*

-Samuel A. Alito, Jr., Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court

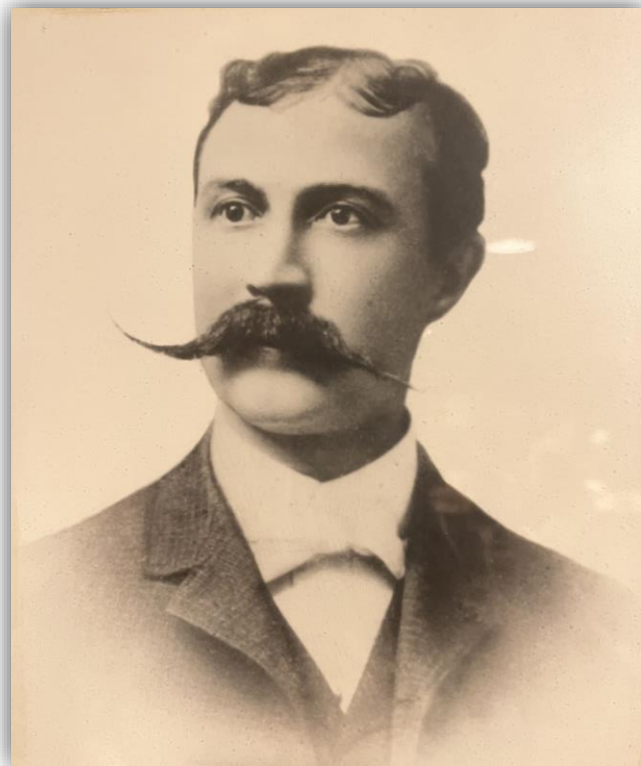
My Grand Lodge of Virginia “Hall of Fame”

(Submitted by Jim DeLucia)

*There is no Hall of Fame for the OSDIA Grand Lodge of Virginia. Having spent many, many hours researching the history of the Grand Lodge, I am in a unique position to share who would be part of the inaugural class of **my** Hall of Fame. This is the first in a series of articles in which I will share details about a person who had significant impact on the Grand Lodge of Virginia or Local Lodges.*

Giovanni “John” Minutolo

Mr. Minutolo was born in 1862 in Puglia, Italy and emigrated to the US in 1890. He listed his occupation as a wholesale fruit merchant. Mr. Minutolo was very active in the Norfolk Italian Colony. He was President of the Norfolk Italian Benevolent Society in 1900. In 1914, Mr. Minutolo was elected the *first* Lodge President of the Roma Lodge when it stood up. Before officially sanctioned, he was elected as the *first* Virginia Grand Lodge President on July 5, 1921. (The Grand Lodge was officially chartered by the Supreme Lodge of Order Sons of Italy in America in November 1922. This prior Grand Lodge was applying for State Corporation and needed officers listed for the application.) Mr. Minutolo died in Norfolk, VA in 1926.



#growingupitalian

Very often the subject comes up of passing along the Italian traditions we all grew up with onto our families and the next generations. It is difficult in these busy times and often in this place. How do we pass along the memories of our grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, and there were many of them, getting together for Sunday dinners at each other's homes? We remember, but how do we relay those memories to our children and grandchildren? Family photo albums, Nonna's recipes, funny Italian phrases, stories....these all work for certain. But children absorb better with hands-on activities that bring the Italian culture, language, food, music, art, history, geography, right into their hearts. Music they hear, food they taste, art they draw, traditions they actually portray and experience – these all can be done to give our younger generations the true awareness of what Italy is like.

What started as a way to teach my grandchildren about their Italian culture and heritage, and I admit, a way to leave them my own legacy, I began *#growingupitalian* when my first grandchildren were very young, yet able to understand, learn, participate in art projects, and cook.

My first thoughts were to create a somewhat relaxed curriculum, but with fun activities to incorporate the subject matter, such as our first ever class on *Giacomo Puccini*. We listened to the best-known and beautiful aria “Nessun dorma” from his famous opera *Turandot* (although my grandchildren knew this song quite well already!) then talked about the language translations of the aria in a simple way. We talked about the story of Calaf who is in love with the beautiful, but cold, Princess *Turandot* and colored the worksheet with pictures, quizzes, and language study, highlighting the simplest words of the aria. These worksheets were developed for each class and were extremely helpful.

I found out very quickly that Italy presents a wonderfully beautiful subject matter and that the children were enthusiastic and eager to learn everything about Italy.

#growingupitalian continued to include classes about *Carnevale in Italia* where we made masks to wear just as those in the parades preceding the beginning of Lent and watched videos of *Carnevale a Venezia*; the life of *Michelangelo* as sculptor, painter, and architect – we made sculptures out of soap bars, and laid on the floor under a coffee table, with black and white pictures of “The Creation of Adam” taped underneath. Using their colored pencils, markers, and crayons, they felt what it might have been like for Michelangelo to lay on his back to paint the beautiful frescos in the Sistine Chapel. We took a virtual tour of the Sistine Chapel at the end of class. For our summer class on *Sunflowers*, I resourced my aunt, who is an artist, and she taught the children three mediums for painting sunflowers: crayons, pastels, and watercolors. I taught them about “Girasole”, the regions where they grow in Italy and when, and what the seeds and oils can be used for after harvesting.

For a winter class we experienced *Natale a Roma*. What fun to talk about the life-sized Nativity scenes – *Presepe* – in Saint Peter's Square and their origins from St. Francis, the Christmas markets throughout the streets of Roma, *Panettone* – Italian Christmas bread, and the rich and beautiful Italian artistry on display in handmade Christmas ornaments. For an art project, we made our own handmade Christmas tree ornaments and prepared and ate a “Torta di Mandorle Italiana” – Italian Almond Cake!

Other classes followed: “Cinque Terre” where we talked about the string of five seaside villages along the Italian Riviera. We were really able to explore this six-mile stretch along the Ligurian Sea dotted with colorful houses, vineyards and harbors filled with fishing boats through a Rick Steves’ travel video, which was fascinating for the children. At the end of class, we tried our hand at making Pesto alla Genovese, originating in Genoa, the region just north of Cinque Terre. It was “delizioso” on our pasta lunch. As the children got a bit older, we ventured into a class called “Roman Mosaic Art” which included an art lesson on the many symbols depicted in Roman mosaic art, Roman life, battle, and the status of its citizens, along with the various materials used such as local stones and brightly colored glass. With a craft store purchase of simple wooden crosses, grout, sealer and assorted glass and stones, the children made beautiful mosaics – each one as different as themselves.

My two favorite classes so far have been 1) *Festa di San Giuseppe* and 2) the *World Pizza Championship*. The children knew about St. Joseph, but also knew he was not Italian. So why does St. Joseph figure so prominently in the Italian culture? We discussed the story and legend of the Sicilian devotion to St. Joseph, the story of the drought that affected the country and the devotion stemming from it. Really, sympathetic children are not too young to hear about a drought and the compassion of citizens to care for one another. The children were hands on in creating a “St. Joseph’s Table” filled with statues, candles, flowers, food, wine, desserts and as much symbolism as our dining table could hold. We made our own “Zeppole di San Giuseppe” for dessert.

Our little class was growing, and the World Pizza Championship was met with great enthusiasm and competition. The class centered on the yearly international pizza championship held in Parma, Italy, the origins of pizza, and ingredients to make an authentic Pizza Napolitan. Then the fun began with each child shaping their own personal pizza from homemade dough, choosing from a large assortment of toppings according to their taste and vision for the perfect pizza worthy of the top prize and honors. Each pizza was baked in our backyard pizza oven. We enlisted the assistance of two neighbors (one was Italian!) to judge each pizza for shape, taste, originality as well as explanations from each contestant on their creations. Young Lucia was the winner and was thrilled with her \$10 gift card and certificate stating she was the Pizza Champion of the year.

#growingupitalian can be an ongoing feature for *Il Giornale* in the future so I am asking for contributions from those of you who continue your family traditions – in as many ways possible – and how you share the Italian culture with your children, grandchildren, and family members. Many of our members are very interested in hearing about ways that we can ensure our culture and traditions can pass from generation to generation.

- *Coletta Sciscilo*

I would like to acknowledge those who assisted and advised me, and contributed articles, pictures and ideas for this quarterly *Il Giornale*:

Beverly Amante, James Cocco, Jim DeLucia, Aldo Funai, Michael Gering, Eleanor Lillo, Maureen Romano, Joseph Scafetta, Jr., Marie Siebeking, and Mary Louise Smith.

Mostly, I am grateful for the support of *i miei amici italiani!* ~ *c.s.*

Joseph Scafetta, Jr., Former State President of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, is requesting the issuance of a commemorative stamp in honor of Tony Bennett by way of the following letter to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee. Joseph encourages all our members to do the same in a coordinated effort to honor this talented, accomplished, and well-loved Italian American.

7011 Round Tree Road
Falls Church, VA 22042
July 24, 2023

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Room 3300
Washington, D.C. 20260-3501

RE: Stamp Development

Dear Committee Members:

I want to recommend that a commemorative stamp be issued to honor the recently deceased Tony Bennett. I suggest that the stamp be issued either on August 3, 2026, which will be the 100th anniversary of his birth, or on August 5, 2026, which will be the fifth anniversary of his final public performance.

Anthony Dominick Benedetto was born in the Queens section of New York City on August 3, 1926, to Italian immigrant parents. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and began his singing career in 1951. At the suggestion of Bob Hope, he shortened his name to Tony Bennett. Over the course of the next 70 years, he sold more than 50 million records and won 20 Grammy Awards. He died in his home in Manhattan on July 21, 2023, 13 days before his 97th birthday.

Please add Tony Bennett to your list of prospective honorees for 2026.

Respectfully submitted,
Joseph Scafetta, Jr.

