

Volume 5  
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# Il Giornale

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

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*A note from the  
Editor:*

## **A note from the Grand Lodge President**

*Sorry it's been  
awhile since  
our last issue!*

Cari Amici

*Hopefully this  
newsletter will  
bring you up to  
date on some of  
the happenings  
in the Grand*

Well another year is about to come to an end and it has been a very eventful year at that. As we started out 2021 we were still deep into the pandemic and all lodge actives were conducted via Zoom or phone. I appreciate everyone's adaptability to continue to reach out to your members via alternate ways. As the year progressed we did start to slowly meet in person. We held our bi-annual convention in June utilizing Zoom for the Friday meeting and then met in person on Saturday to ensure we conducted our required business including the election of officers. I am honored to be re-elected as President and that the majority of Grand Lodge Council remained intact.

*Lodge of  
Virginia and  
it's subordinate  
lodges.*

Recently we have had all the lodges restarting in person activities to include some of the following activities:

Roma Lodge's recently participated in the King Neptune Parade which I attended with them.

*Please submit  
articles to:*

The Italo America Citizens Lodge held their centennial banquet in September at the Roma Lodge with almost 100 in attendance.

*[beverlyamante](mailto:beverlyamante@ gmail.com)*

The Italian Heritage Lodge held numerous events over the past couple of months to include their attendance at the National Columbus Day Ceremony in Washington, they also attended the "Walk to End Alzheimer's" and other additional activities.

*[@gmail.com](mailto:beverlyamante@ gmail.com)*

PIAL held a picnic during the summer and had a Columbus Day celebration in October.

Giuseppe Verdi Lodge went to the Races (at Rosies ), held the "Class of Life" – a one man show in October

As you can see from the above activities all lodges continue to meet in person for various activities and meetings.

The National convention was held in October (via Zoom) Bob Biachi was elected as National President and presided over the two day zoom convention. I will report out on the convention during the December Grand Lodge meeting.

I Hope everyone has a very enjoyable and safe holiday season over the next couple of months with Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's. Please take time to enjoy your

friends and family and stay healthy and reach out to those that you haven't seen or heard of recently.

Ciao,

Larry Brennan, Grand Lodge President

## 37<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention

The Grand Lodge of Virginia held its 37<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention on Friday, June 25<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>. The Friday session which was a Zoom meeting had several of our key committees meeting and preparing for their presentation on Saturday. On Saturday we came together at the Giuseppe Verdi Lodge #315 which is in Mechanicville, Virginia. On that day, various committees reported out and new officers were voted on and installed.

Delegates in attendance broke for lunch after the new council was voted in. We had a tent set up on the grounds of the Verdi Lodge. Our lunch was catered by Panera Bread.

## Convention Highlights!

- **Awarding of Merit Point Winners**
  - ◆ 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Giuseppe Verdi Lodge #315
  - ◆ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Italo-American Citizens Lodge #1077
  - ◆ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Peninsula Italian-American Lodge #2145
  - ◆ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Roma Lodge #254
- **Awarding of State Award of Appreciation**
  - ◆ Amanda Hertzog – Italo-American Citizens Lodge #1077
  - ◆ Gordon Grappone -- Giuseppe Verdi Lodge #315
  - ◆ Mike Matassa -- Giuseppe Verdi Lodge #315
- **Awarding of State Scholarship Winners**
  - ◆ Sydney Coursey, Joseph Fulton Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000)
  - ◆ Alexandria Strong, John Asiello Scholarship (\$1,000)
- **Election and Installation of 2021-2023 State Officers**
  - ◆ **President:** Larry Brennan
  - ◆ **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:** Marie Siebeking
  - ◆ **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:** Terry DeLucia
  - ◆ **Immediate Past President:** Bob Amante
  - ◆ **Orator:** Paul Siebeking
  - ◆ **Recording Secretary:** Beverly Amante
  - ◆ **Financial Secretary:** John Gossner
  - ◆ **Treasurer:** Robert Mason
  - ◆ **State Trustees:** Marianne Hallahan, Ellie Bove Amanda Hertzog, Mary Louise Smith, Jim DeLucia, Linwood Sykes, Maryann DeVincentis
  - ◆ **Arbitration Committee:** Bea Sykes, Florence Alfano, Ruth Spendolini, Virginia Bowe, John Asiello. Alternates: Briana

Taravella Robison, Joe Betzala, Jack Boles, Betty McGowan, Lola Musarra

- ◆ **Virginia OSIA Foundation:** Kathy Drummond-chairperson, Jim DeLucia, Paul Siebeking, Marie Siebeking, Larry Brennan, Bob Amante

### State Awards Given at Convention

Local Lodges honor members for jobs well done!

**Congratulations to all State Award Winners! Your dedication to The Sons of Italy and your local & state lodge is what helps to make us a great organization!**

**The members of the Grand Lodge of Virginia thank you for all that you do!**

A special thanks to Giuseppe Verdi's lodge's Arthur Smith for heading up this committee



**Amanda Hertzog, Italo-American Citizens Lodge, receives her award from State President Larry Brennan, also a member of Italo-American Citizens Lodge**



Giuseppe Verdi Lodge honored two of their members. State President Larry Brennan and Lodge President Aldo Funai present awards to:

Left: Gordon Grappone

Right: Mike Matassa

### Merit Point Winners Announced

A special thanks to Roma Lodge's Paul Seibeking for heading up this committee



Pictured here, Paul Seibeking (right), Merit Point chairperson, Larry Brennan GLVA President (left) & Tony Alfano, President of Roma Lodge our 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner.



**Pictured here, Paul Seibeking(right), Merit Point chairperson, Larry Brennan (left) GLVA President & Bob Amante President Peninsula Italian American Lodge & Amanda Hertzog President Italo American Citizen Lodge, 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners**



**Pictured here, Paul Seibeking (right), Merit Point chairperson, Larry Brennan (left), GLVA President & Aldo Funai, President Giuseppe Verdi Lodge 1<sup>st</sup> place winner.**

# Scholarship Winners

The Grand Lodge gave out two scholarships this year. Let's meet the winners



**John Asiello Scholarship was awarded to Alexandria Strong. Alexandria is the daughter of Laura Strong and the granddaughter of Laura & John Asiello. She will be attending James Madison University in the fall.**



**The Joseph Fulton Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Sydney Coursey, daughter of Chris & Patricia Coursey and granddaughter of Bea & Lindwood Sykes. She will be attending James Madison University in the fall.**

**Pictured with the two scholarship winners are State President, Larry Brennan and Scholarship Chairperson, Kathy Drummond.**

# Picture Corner

Enjoy some fun pictures from the convention





**Now for some non-convention information**



# Local Lodges try to get back to meeting!

**When the pandemic first started, several of the lodges either stopped meeting or met virtually. As we began 2021, most of the lodges tried to do something to bring their members back together. Let's take a look at what the lodges were up to!**

## **Giuseppe Verdi Lodge**

### **THE CLASS OF LIFE- A one man show**

The "Class of Life," a one man show, performed and written by Paul Failla and directed by his talented friend, Michael Moriarty returned to Giuseppe Verdi Lodge for a second performance on October 9, 2021. The first show was held in 2019.

The synopsis of Paul's show is a theatrical experience that takes the audience on a journey which highlights one man's life. The story begins on the last day of his distinguished career as a police officer. This day gives way to reminiscing about his motivation to become a police officer, his proud Italian heritage, his upbringing, and married life. Utilizing a blend of humor, drama, and life experience, the actor takes his audience on an emotional roller coaster through stories relating to all. This poignant presentation will surely touch the lives of those who value family, tradition, and comedy.

Want a fun event for your lodge? Or combining with a sister lodge for a fundraiser? You may want to consider bring Paul and the show to your area!!! Here are a few pictures of Paul during his performance.

Contact info: [www.TheClassofLife.com](http://www.TheClassofLife.com) or Facebook The Class of Life- A Theatrical Experience.

**This article was submitted by Aldo Funai, President of the Verdi Lodge.**



## Italian Heritage Lodge

### ITALIAN HERITAGE LODGE OF FAIRFAX, VA. NATIONAL CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS ASSOCIATION CEREMONY

**This article  
was  
submitted  
by Nicolette  
Sciscilo,  
Immediate  
Past  
President of  
the Italian  
Heritage  
Lodge**

The Italian Heritage Lodge (IHL) of Fairfax, Virginia, #2517 of the Order Sons & Daughters of Italy in America, participated in the National Christopher Columbus Association (NCCA) Ceremony honoring the accomplishments of Christopher Columbus on Columbus Day, Monday, October 11, 2021. The annual event, in collaboration with the National Park Service, was held at the Columbus Memorial in front of the Union Station in Washington, D.C.

Members of the public in attendance were treated to patriotic music, the national anthems of the United States, Italy, and Spain, remarks by various diplomats and dignitaries, as well as the reading of the winning essay and presentation of awards to Joseph Stetson, Steubenville, Ohio, this year's winner of the NCCA and the National Italian-American Foundation Essay Contest on Christopher Columbus. Together with many other prominent organizations, the IHL placed a wreath in front of the Columbus Memorial.

After the ceremony, Dawn Falsinotti, IHL President, was presented with a Certificate of Membership in the NCCA “for the purpose of recognizing the historic achievements and discoveries of Christopher Columbus” by James P. McCusker, NCCA President



IHL officers stand in front of Union Station after the Columbus Day ceremony. From left to right, they are Trustee Marianne Hallahan, Immediate Past President Nicolette Sciscilo, President Dawn Falsinotti, Membership Chair Sharon Peruzzi Strauchs, and Recording Secretary Eleanor Lillo.

Nicolette Sciscilo, center, IHL Immediate Past President, presents a wreath in front of the Columbus Memorial. She is flanked, from left to right, by a Columbus actor, a Knight of Columbus escort, NCCA President James P. McCusker, and a second Knight of Columbus escort.



## **ITALIAN HERITAGE LODGE OF FAIRFAX, VA. WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE**

Members of the Italian Heritage Lodge (IHL) of Fairfax, Virginia, #2517 of the Order Sons & Daughters of Italy in America, walked a two-mile course through Historic Old Town Manassas, Virginia, on Saturday, October 16, 2021, to raise funds to end Alzheimer's Disease and all other forms of dementia, with many supporters who know or have lost family members.

As a fraternal organization, the IHL supports this organization through its yearly charitable fundraising. It takes the opportunity to participate in a local “walk” to visibly support awareness of this worthy cause.



Six members of the IHL stand before the start line for a two-mile walk through Historic Old Town Manassas, Va., to end Alzheimer’s Disease on Saturday, October 16, 2021.

## **Peninsula Italian American Lodge**

**This article was submitted by Beverly Amante, Trustee for Peninsula Italian American Lodge & VAOSDIA Recording Secretary**

Members of PIAL had their first real in person meeting since the onset of COVID in June of 2021. We had a picnic for our members at Bethel Park in Hampton. We have had our last few annual picnics there as they have covered shelters we can rent. They will also supply things like corn hole boards for the use of the guests. Usually we have our picnics in May as June tends to be too hot but this year we opted for June. The weather was wonderful! Great temperature and little to no humidity. We also had a surprise baby shower for our Immediate Past President, Mindy Sherbeck at the picnic! Here are some pictures from the event.



In July we met inside for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic. We meet at the K of C hall in Newport News. At this event we honored our three scholarship winners as well as one of our winners from last year (we did not have a scholarship dinner in 2021 so we invited our last year's winner to join us this year). We gave out a total of \$2500 in scholarships this year.





In October we celebrated a combined Columbus Day and PIAL Heritage Day. Jim DeLucia, our treasurer and resident historian, put together a presentation for the group. We meet at Mama Rose’s Italian Restaurant for a family style meal. Beverly Amante made her tiramisu for dessert. A great time was had by all who attended and no one went away hungry.



As is our custom, we had a Thanksgiving feast at the KofC with the lodge providing the ham and dessert. The members provided side dishes.

For Christmas, we had three special guests join us: Colonel Stefano Panoni, Italian Liaison Officer to US Army TRADC, our State President, Larry Brennan and Santa Claus.



## Roma Lodge

### FLAGS OF HONOR FOR LOST MILITARY MEMBERS

**This article was submitted by Paul Siebeking, member of Roma Lodge, VAOSDIA Orator and Past President**

Virginia Beach Roma Lodge #254 set up a table displaying 13 flags in honor of the American soldiers who were killed by a suicide bomber in Afghanistan. God Bless them, may they rest in peace with the Lord.

Yellow Ribbons were tied around trees and will be kept there until all Americans Stranded in Afghanistan are brought home.

There was also a moment of silence in honor of these brave Americans by Roma Lodge Members during their Labor Day Picnic.

The lodge also held a silent auction. The food left over after the picnic was donated to Vets House of Virginia Beach.



**13 HONOR FLAGS & THE PICTURES OF THOSE MILITARY (Ret) MEMBERS LOST IN AFGHANISTAN**

**Marie Siebeking, Paul Siebeking, USN (Ret), John Gossner, USN (Ret)**





## ORIGAMI FLOWER MAKING PROJECT

Roma Lodge #254 volunteers worked on an Origami Flower Making Project that was started on April 3, 2021. Volunteers met every month to cut, fold, glue and prepare flowers and pots to complete this project. 126 flowers in pots were completed on July 13<sup>th</sup>, three months later, and were delivered to Luther Manor Senior Nursing Home in Virginia Beach on August 10<sup>th</sup> by the volunteers.

The volunteers thoroughly enjoyed the company, the fellowship and the lunch that always followed and were sorry to see this project is done. Attached are pictures of the flowers and the volunteers who were available.



### ROMA LODGE VOLUNTEER'S AND THE FLOWERS PRESENTED

In addition, the Roma Lodge participated in the Neptune Festival Parade on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Here are a couple of pictures from the parade.



## Italo American Citizens Lodge

### Italo-American Citizens Lodge #1077 Portsmouth, VA 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

**This article  
was  
submitted  
by Amanda  
Hertzog,  
President of  
Italo  
American  
Citizens  
Lodge**

We had been looking forward to this evening for many months. And having to reschedule once, we were more than ready to finally get our celebration finalized. There were a few bumps, but it turned out wonderful. (The night almost didn't get to kick off due to an underground line backup. Huge THANK YOU to Brother Dan for getting that fixed quickly, and a big Thank You to the City of Virginia Beach for getting there so quickly.)

Our committee (Sisters Amanda Hertzog, Kristina Casab, Donna Arnold, and Mary Carroll) worked hard on the location, DJ, catering, and decorations. Sister lodges really helped by donating and helping in many ways to make this night the success that it was. We must thank Marie and Paul Siebeking, Mary Louise and Arthur Smith, Giuseppe Verdi Lodge, Angle Ellis, Kim Waltz, and anyone else that stepped in to help pull this night off.

We started getting set up the day before with friends and family. The decorations were of course red, white, and green. The tables could not have turned out more perfect. The Roma lodge let us use their red tablecloths and white chair covers. Amanda and Dan



Hertzog gave the lodge the wood circle platters to use as part of the center pieces. Mary Louise Smith put together the jars holding the red, white, and green pasta with the American and Italian flags. Angle Ellis printed the custom labels that had our name and 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We placed those on donated wine bottles that also held red & white carnations donated by Donna Arnold. The lodge purchased the silverware, plates, and sashes for the chairs. So many helped, and it is appreciated greatly.

Paul and Marie Siebeking took our flags from 1921 and fixed them so that they could be hung. Steaming out decades of wrinkles and getting them prepped. Brother Paul put together for his lodge a heartwarming tribute to the 13 American Soldiers that lost their lives in the Kabul airport attack. We felt it was important to use this for all our guests to see, so we had it center stage. Our lodge (just like many others) has prior servicemen, and it is important to show respect to the sacrifice of our American soldiers.

We had 2 large tables filled with historical artifacts from our lodge's past. It was beautiful and a great pleasure to stop and look at our history in full display.

Sister Kim Waltz started the night with a prayer to bless the even and the food. Our DJ (Shannon Cooper) was fantastic. We enjoyed her music, and she expressed her gratitude in being included in our celebration.

One of the bumps we had was less than a week before our event, our cater had to cancel due to COVID. We were able to contact YNot Pizzeria and get almost the exact menu. We only had to put together the hors d'oeuvres.

During our presentation (lead by our President Amanda Hertzog) we gave Lifetime Appreciation awards to Brother Richard Spendolini and Sister Ruth Spendolini. They have been apart of our lodge since the 70's. Holding just about every office at different times. Brother Richard had even put together the biannual Grand Lodge convention several years back. It was a must for us at this important celebration to recognize these two members for their monumental contribution to our lodge and the organization.

We also recognized Grand President Brother Larry Brennan for being our guest speaker as well as his great contributions to our lodge and organization.

His speech helped bring awareness to our lodges historically documented attributions to our community, and the importance of trying to build our membership to keep our organization going.

We sold tickets for 50/50, a money tree, and baskets donated by different members and lodges. After the tickets were called out the dance began. Many got out on that dance floor and broke a sweat. The lodge was humbled by all those that drove or flew in to attend our celebration during the difficult time of a global pandemic. Lodges sat with their own members, and masks were provided as well as several stations with hand sanitizer. Food was served by officers of the Italo-American Citizen lodge wearing gloves and masks. We tried to ensure we had as safe of a celebration as possible. The night closed with family and friends working together to clean up the party and load everything up.

Looking back, it feels like it went by in a flash. We missed some that couldn't attend but held them in our spirits. Thank you again to the many that helped pull this night off. No matter how big or small your attribution was, it helped, and we couldn't have pulled it off without your help. It was a fantastic night!



# Some Pictures from the event



## Upcoming event

March 2022

**Grand Lodge of Virginia Board Meeting**

**Giuseppi Verdi Lodge**

**Richmond, Va.**