

# May Questo Mese Newsletter

From Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America <nationaloffice@osia.org>

Date Friday, May 1st, 2026



May | Maggio 2026

A MESSAGE FROM

## National President, Thomas A. Lupo



*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

As we enter May and reflect on the month before us, I hope that each of you enjoyed a joyful Easter holiday spent with family and loved ones. This season continues to serve as a reminder of renewal, unity, and the importance of coming together as a community.

On April 25, we recognized Liberation Day, commemorating Italy's liberation from Fascism and Nazi occupation in 1945.

The day honors the courage, resilience, and sacrifice of those who fought for freedom and remains an important occasion for reflection and remembrance within our Italian American community.

On another note, I was especially honored to deliver remarks on April 18 at the Garibaldi-Meucci Museum street dedication ceremony, where the adjoining streets were officially co-named Giuseppe Garibaldi Way and Antonio Meucci Way—a meaningful tribute to two influential figures in Italian and Italian American history. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Frances R. Curcio and the entire GMM Board for working with the Borough of Staten Island to make this dedication a reality, and to all supporters of the museum who showed up to honor this important occasion. More information and photos from the event are available further in the newsletter.

April was a productive and engaging month across our organization. On April 22, we held a Sons of Italy Foundation Board Meeting, led by President Joe Sciame and myself, with key support from National Executive Director Shayla Kaestle. During the meeting, we covered a range of important topics related to the continued growth and strength of the Foundation, including presentations on proposed projects to be funded through the generous contributions raised by our members in support of communities in southern Italy impacted by the devastation of Cyclone Harry.

In addition, our Committee Advisory Meeting brought forward many valuable ideas and tools. I look forward to seeing how our Vice Presidents implement these insights in their leadership roles moving forward.

It was also a pleasure to attend the NYSOSDIA Grand Lodge Foundation 41st Golden Lion Awards Dinner at the Garden City Hotel on April 24, as well as participate in a recent plenary session, both of which highlighted the strength and vibrancy of our membership.

Excitement continues to build as we approach the [37th Annual National Education and Leadership Awards \(NELA\) Gala](#), taking place later this month on May 28, 2026, at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C. This year, we are proud to celebrate the Region of Umbria as our official Region of Celebration, highlighting its rich cultural heritage and enduring influence.

We also look forward to honoring this year's distinguished award recipients, whose leadership and service exemplify the values of our Order. The Gala remains a cornerstone event in support of the Sons of Italy Foundation's mission, particularly in providing scholarships and advancing philanthropic initiatives.

As we continue to strengthen communication and engagement across our organization, I encourage all members to explore our [newly redesigned OSDIA national website](#). This updated platform offers improved access to news, events, and resources, and serves as an important tool in keeping our members connected and informed.

I would also like to continue to recognize and thank our National Executive Director, Shayla Kaestle, for her continued partnership and dedication. We are working hand in hand to strengthen our organization and move our mission forward.

As we move forward into spring, we remain committed to advancing our mission through service, leadership, and the preservation of our heritage. The continued dedication of our members is what ensures the strength and future of our Order.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to OSDIA.

Fraternally,

Thomas A. Lupo

*National President, Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America*



## Support the 2026 NELA Gala Honorees with an Ad or Sponsorship!



**Thursday, May 28, 2026 | 6 p.m. Reception | 7 p.m. Program**  
**Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center**

The Sons of Italy Foundation's 37th Annual National Education & Leadership Awards (NELA) Gala returns to Washington, D.C., celebrating an extraordinary group of visionaries whose work embodies service, excellence, and the enduring spirit of the Italian American community.

This year, we are proud to honor the Region of Umbria and highlight the ever-strengthening bond between Italy and the United States.

Scroll down to view this year's esteemed guests and honorees, including leaders in business, the arts, humanitarian work, higher education, and more.

Throughout the year, Umbria will be featured across OSDIA's national programming, with special recognition at the NELA Gala and beyond. The NELA Gala has raised tens of millions of dollars for scholarships and charitable causes, including over \$600,000 in scholarships awarded over the past four years. These scholarships directly support Italian American students in pursuing their academic goals, empowering the next generation of leaders and helping preserve the rich cultural legacy of our community.

Celebrate Italian heritage and be part of a meaningful evening. Secure your tickets and explore sponsorship opportunities today.

[Buy Tickets](#)

[Buy Sponsorships & Ads](#)

## Honorary Chair



Stefania Proietti  
*President of the Region of Umbria*

## Honorary Co-Chair



Marco Peronaci  
*Ambassador of Italy to the United States*

## Honorees



## Comm. Joseph Sciame

*Vice President Emeritus, St. John's University,  
NY; President, Sons of Italy Foundation*

[Learn More](#)



## Mary Naccarato

*Chair Emeritus, OSDIA Grand Lodge of New  
York Gift of Sight Committee; Grand Lodge of  
New York Past First Lady*

[Learn More](#)



## Cav. Anthony Julian

### Tamburri, Ph.D.

*Dean, John D. Calandra Italian American  
Institute & Distinguished Professor of European  
Languages and Literatures, Queens College,  
CUNY*

[Learn More](#)



## Vincent J. Delie, Jr.

*Chairman, President, and CEO of F.N.B.  
Corporation (NYSE: FNB) and its banking  
subsidiary, First National Bank*

[Learn More](#)

## Special Guests



Sal "The Voice"  
Valentinetti

Master of Ceremonies



Christopher  
Macchio

Musical Guest

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**Garibaldi-Meucci Museum Hosts Street Renaming  
Ceremony in Honor of Giuseppe Garibaldi &  
Antonio Meucci**



*Guests look on as Joseph Sciamè, GMM Chair & CEO, addresses the crowd. Photo courtesy of Dennis Rees.*

On April 18, the adjoining streets of the Garibaldi-Meucci Museum on Staten Island—Tompkins Avenue and Chestnut Avenue—were officially co-named Giuseppe Garibaldi Way and Antonio Meucci Way as a meaningful tribute to the enduring legacy of two influential figures in Italian and Italian American history.

The new street signs were officially unveiled at a dedication ceremony, gathering more than 170 people from the Staten Island community and beyond to commemorate the occasion. OSDIA members from around the country were also present for the event. GMM National Overseer Co-Chairs Carol and Angelo Rossi organized a bus of members from Massachusetts, and other members from Delaware, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Florida, New Jersey, and Upstate New York were also present.

Among those who provided remarks at the event are: Comm. Joseph Sciamè, Sons of Italy Foundation President and GMM CEO & Chair; Kamillah Hanks, New York City Councilwoman; Michael F. McMahon, Richmond County District Attorney; Giuseppe Pastorelli, Consul General of Italy in New York; Marianne Bortone Prince, GMM Commissioner & Co-Chair; Dr. Joseph V. Scelsa, President and Founder of the Italian American Museum in Manhattan; Dr. Anthony J. Tamburri, Dean of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute; Carol and Angelo Rossi, GMM National Overseer Co-Chairs; and Luigi Squillante, First Vice President of the OSDIA Grand Lodge of New York. OSDIA National President Thomas A. Lupo provided closing remarks to the event's guests.

During the event, Dr. Frances R. Curcio was formally recognized by President Lupo with a certificate for her tireless efforts to make the street co-naming possible. Click the buttons below to learn more and to watch a recording from the event.

## Learn More about the Event



*Thomas A. Lupu (left) and Joseph Sciame (center) pose for a photo with Dr. Frances R. Curcio (right) after presenting her with a certificate of achievement. Photo courtesy of OSDIA.*

## Watch Event Here



*Thomas A. Lupu, OSDIA National President, addresses the crowd. Photo courtesy of OSDIA.*



*The newly co-named street signs for Giuseppe Garibaldi Way and Antonio Meucci Way. Photo courtesy of Dennis Rees.*



*Joseph Sciame (right) addresses the crowd during the event. Photo courtesy of Dennis Rees.*



*OSDLA members, national officers and GMM Board members pose for a photo with street signs for Antonio Meucci Way and Giuseppe Garibaldi Way. Photo courtesy of Dennis Rees.*



*Guests during the GMM street dedication ceremony. Photo courtesy of Dennis Rees.*

## About the Garibaldi Meucci Museum:

The Garibaldi Meucci Museum (GMM) is a National Historic Landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has been owned and operated by the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America® (OSDIA and the Sons of Italy Foundation® (SIF) since 1919.

The SIF is the philanthropic arm of OSDIA, the oldest and largest organization for men and women of Italian heritage in the United States. The SIF is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The GMM is administered by the Grand Lodge of New York, OSDIA®.



## **Our Italian Roots | OSDIA Members Reflect on Their Ancestral Towns**

**📍 Comune di Acquafondata  
Region of Lazio – Province of Frosinone**



*The restored bell tower in Acquafondata.*

**By Bernard Costanza**

**Central Pennsylvania Lodge 2651 | Camp Hill, Pennsylvania**

## **A Bell Tower Restored, A Heritage Honored**

Albert Piscopo, a long distance Central Pennsylvania Lodge member now residing with his wife Laura in Florida, recently traveled to Acquafondata, Italy, the ancestral hometown of Albert's maternal family. What began as a personal visit became an unforgettable community celebration.

Albert has visited Acquafondata several times since 2014 to learn more about his grandparents, Lorenzo and Antoinetta Fuoco. Nestled high in the mountains near Monte Cassino, Acquafondata is a small commune whose population has declined over the past century—much like many historic Italian villages.

During earlier visits, Albert became especially connected to an 1890 bell tower dedicated to his ancestor Giuseppe Fuoco, a former mayor of the town. Time had taken its toll, leaving the tower in serious disrepair. In 2018, when town officials reached out for support to restore the structure, Albert was honored to fund the project.

In September 2023, Albert and Laura returned to Acquafondata, expecting a quiet stay. Instead, they were warmly welcomed by residents gathered in the town square. To their surprise, a formal dedication ceremony had been planned in their honor.

At the restored bell tower, Albert was introduced to Mayor Marina Di Meo and unveiled a commemorative plaque. The mayor expressed the town's gratitude for his generosity, and Albert shared heartfelt thanks for the unexpected recognition. Laura captured the moment on camera to share with family back home.

The celebration continued with a reception in the town square, where Mayor Di Meo and her father, former mayor Antonio Di Meo, presented Albert with a Certificate of Merit from the town—an honor the family will treasure for generations.

What began as a journey to learn about his grandparents has grown into a lasting bond with a community that now considers Albert one of its own. It is a connection he is proud to share with Laura, his children, and his grandchildren.



*(From left to right): Antonio DiMeo, Laura Piscopo, Al Piscopo, Mayor Marina Di Meo.*



*A photo of the Certificate of Merit from the Comune di Acquafondata.*

Do you have a story about your Italian roots? We want to hear them! Click the button below to access our submission form for OSDIA members.

### Submit Your Story

*"Our Italian Roots" is a series of stories from OSDIA members reflecting on their ancestral towns in Italy. The project, started by OSDIA's Culture Committee, was created to bring members closer to their roots and to highlight the vast cultural diversity of Italian towns and cities.*



**Your Support is Still Needed!**  
**Donate Today to Support Cyclone Relief Efforts**



*A community in Southern Italy in the aftermath of Cyclone Harry. Photo courtesy of Exploring Italy via Facebook.*

The Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF) is continuing to raise critical funds to support our Italian brothers and sisters in the aftermath of Cyclone Harry, which has caused devastating destruction across Southern Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia.

Families have been displaced, homes destroyed, and entire communities are facing widespread flooding, infrastructure damage, and prolonged power outages.

OSDIA is actively working alongside the Italian government to support affected communities. On February 4, 2026, OSDIA National President Thomas A. Lupo met with Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Antonio Tajani, and Ambassador Marco Peronaci at the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C., to coordinate ongoing humanitarian relief efforts, joined by other Italian American leaders.

“Community has always been at the heart of our mission,” said Lupo. “The Sons of Italy Foundation stands ready to support the Italian community in their moment of need.”



*From left to right: Marco Peronaci, Ambassador of Italy to the U.S.; Justin Smith, OSDIA Managing Director; Antonio Tajani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy; Shayla Kaestle, OSDIA National Executive Director; and Comm. Thomas A. Lupo, OSDIA National President.*

For more than 60 years, the Sons of Italy Foundation has responded when disaster strikes. Your generosity will help bring relief and hope to those facing this hardship.

Click below to make your make a donation and pledge your support for Italians in need:

Donate Here



## OSDIA Spotlight: Cape Fear Lodge 3022 Instituted in Wilmington



*(From left to right): Lodge Vice Presidents Maria Venezia and Michael Chestone, Lodge President Marc Biundo, OSDIA National 2nd Vice President Mark DeNunzio, and Charlotte Lodge 3016 President & New Lodge Formation Committee Co-Chair Vincent Fauceglia.*

On April 19, 2026, a significant milestone was reached with the official institution of Cape Fear Lodge 3022 in Wilmington, North Carolina. The ceremony brought together members and supporters to celebrate the establishment of a vibrant new lodge dedicated to preserving Italian heritage and strengthening community service. With over 80 charter members and a strong leadership team led by President Marc Biundo, the lodge begins its journey with enthusiasm, unity, and a clear commitment to growth.

With numerous activities already planned and a focus on cultural programming, philanthropy, and member engagement, the lodge is well-positioned for success. Its chartering not only highlights the

continued expansion of the Order in the Southeast but also serves as a promising example of how tradition and innovation can come together to build strong, lasting communities.



## **Grand Lodge of Connecticut Raises Money for Restoration of Columbus Statue**



*From left to right: Justin Smith, OSDLA Managing Director, Michael G. Polo, OSDLA National Immediate Past President, Dan Onofrio, OSDLA Grand Lodge of Connecticut Past President, and Joseph Belizzi, OSDLA Grand Lodge of Connecticut President.*

On Monday, April 27th, Dan Onofrio, Grand Lodge of Connecticut Past President, was instrumental in organizing and hosting a community fundraising dinner in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The event brought together local Italian American organizations and supporters, including OSDIA's anti-defamation and positive image arm, the Commission for Social Justice, to raise funds for the restoration and reinstallation of the Christopher Columbus statue at Seaside Park. The initiative followed the statue's removal in 2020, an action that sparked significant discussion and concern within the Italian American community

The fundraiser, held at Circolo Sportivo – Italo Americano, successfully united attendees in support of preserving Italian American heritage and history. Through strong participation and collaboration, the event highlighted the community's commitment to honoring cultural legacy and ensuring the statue's return.



**Grand Lodge  
of Connecticut**  
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# Italian America Magazine Launches Article Pitch Submission Form



Italian America, OSDIA's official quarterly magazine, and the most widely read publication for Italian American men and women in the United States, is dedicated to celebrating Italian heritage, culture, and community. We are seeking fresh voices and compelling stories to feature in upcoming issues.

Whether you have a personal story, cultural insight, historical feature, or creative piece, we invite you to submit a pitch (or a full story) outlining your idea. Story pitches should be limited to 250 words and address topics pertinent to the Italian American community.

Interested in contributing? Submit your pitch through our online form and become part of Italian America's storytelling tradition. Reach out to [italianamerica@osia.org](mailto:italianamerica@osia.org) with any questions.

[Link to Submission Form](#)



# News from the Boot

Check out the latest from Italy!



[Learn More](#)

## *Italy recovers 337 looted antiquities from United States*

Reuters

The United States returned 337 looted antiquities to Italy in one of the largest recent repatriations of stolen cultural property, marking a meaningful step in preserving and honoring Italy's rich cultural heritage. The recovered items, ranging from Roman sculptures to Greek, Etruscan, and Egyptian artifacts, were originally stolen or illegally excavated and will now be studied and returned to their places of origin in Italy.

## *Rome's foremost restaurant festival celebrates 10 years and moves to a new location.*

Wanted in Rome

Taste of Roma marks its 10th anniversary in 2026 with a move to the iconic Gazometro Ostiense, where the space will be transformed into a vibrant "Taste Village." Held in Rome, the five-day festival will feature over 20 top restaurants and renowned chefs, including Heinz Beck and Angelo Troiani, offering guests immersive culinary experiences, tastings, and live events.



[Learn More](#)



## ***Martin Scorsese's film about Pope Francis to receive world premiere in Vatican City***

**The Guardian**

A new documentary by Martin Scorsese, titled *Aldeas: The Final Dream of Pope Francis*, premiered at the Vatican to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of Pope Francis. The film highlights the Pope's final in-depth interview and explores the global mission of Scholas Occurrentes, an organization he founded to promote social integration through art, education, and community engagement.

**Learn More**



## **Help us Highlight Your Lodge's Festivals & Festas!**

We are compiling a comprehensive list of OSDIA lodges that sponsor or participate in local Italian festivals and festas. This resource will help showcase the incredible cultural traditions happening across our organization and serve as a valuable reference for members nationwide.

**To ensure your lodge is included, please take a moment to complete this short questionnaire at the link below:**

**[Click Here for Submission Link](#)**



**Reminder: OSDIA Membership Pins, Banners & Regalia for Sale through Russell Hampton!**



Calling all local lodge leaders!

All official OSDIA membership pins, banners, regalia, Dante scholarship medals, and other branded merchandise are available for purchase through our partners at Russell Hampton.

If you are an officer at a local lodge and are interested in these items for your lodge, please purchase directly through the link below!

Order Through Russell Hampton



## April Lodge Anniversaries



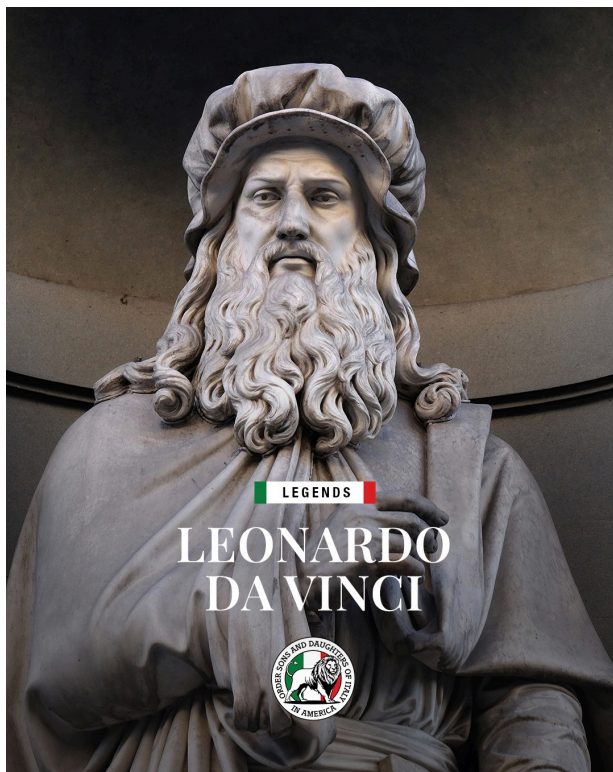
This past month, the following lodges reached important anniversaries. The National Office congratulates these lodges on reaching these important milestones and wishes them the best for the years ahead!

- **115 Year Anniversary:** Roma Lodge 71 | Washington, D.C.
- **100 Year Anniversary:** Francesco De Sanctis Lodge 1411 | Natick, MA



## SOCIAL MEDIA

# Post of the Month



**#BornOnThisDay**, Leonardo da Vinci was shaped by one of the most dynamic periods in Italian history.

Living during the Renaissance, Leonardo moved through a landscape of powerful city-states like Florence, Milan, and Venice—centers of art, politics, and rivalry. It was an era of influential patrons, including the Medici, whose support helped drive a cultural rebirth grounded in human potential and innovation.

Amid shifting alliances and court intrigue, Leonardo worked for dukes and rulers not only as a painter, but as an engineer and thinker. His notebooks capture a world in transition—where art, science, and ambition intersected in remarkable ways.

[Visit Post](#)



## Refer Your Friends & Family!



Invite your friends and family to celebrate our rich heritage, make lasting connections, and be part of our vibrant community.

Become A Member



## Follow Our Social Channels!

Follow us for daily content celebrating all things Italian-American!

Join our social family today and be part of our mission to preserve our cherished heritage and build a brighter future together.





## Advertise Your Business in *Italian America* Magazine!

Want the opportunity to showcase your business for a nationwide readership of Italian Americans? You can always promote it in our *Italian America* magazine! For more information,

**[CLICK HERE!](#)**

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