
September Questo Mese Newsletter

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

Tue, Sep 1, 2026

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To: pirandellolodge@gmail.com



September | Settembre 2026

A MESSAGE FROM

National President Thomas A. Lupo



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This past month has been culturally significant for Italians and Italian Americans alike while also being busy, productive, and exciting for our Order at a national level. In addition to the widely celebrated holidays of [Ferragosto](#) and the [Feast of the Assumption](#) across Italy and the U.S. on August 15, a multitude of exciting end-of summer events and traditions have taken place over the course of the past few weeks, such as the [Festa di San Rocco](#), which is an especially important holiday for Italian American communities in New York, Chicago, and Boston.

This past month, I also reached my first full year as National President, a milestone that I was proud to reach while attending OSDIA's 2026 Summer Plenary in San Francisco, California. Over the course of the plenary, OSDIA leadership, National Officers and Committee Chairs shared updates about their ongoing work and initiatives, and OSDIA Grand Lodge Presidents shared updates from their states, focusing on the ways our members continue to promote and preserve our shared heritage within their communities. Over the course of the plenary, I was also proud to see the ongoing collaboration between leaders across the country as we discussed

fundraising, membership, and ideas to expand our lodge footprint to even more communities worldwide.

I thank all members of the OSDIA Supreme Council who attended this year's plenary, and would like to extend a particularly special thank you to our five National Vice Presidents: Kevin Caira, Dr. Mark DeNunzio, Brian M. Andzik, Frank Gattuso, Esq., and Robert M. Ferrito, as well as Committee Performance Advisor Don Cimorelli, all of whom—in addition to other duties—serve as special advisors to our National Committees. I extend my thanks, too, to National Executive Director Shayla Kaestle, Managing Director Justin Smith, and Programs Director Nicole D'Arcangelo, among many others who were integral in making the meeting a success. I also thank our hardworking National Office staff and invaluable volunteers for their many contributions.

During the plenary, our National Vice Presidents and Committee Chairs shared a variety of exciting updates from the past six months. These included a review of recently instituted lodges and an update on those in the pipeline, the raising of more than \$120,000 for our national charities, Cyclone Harry relief efforts, and the Commission for Social Justice, as well as important initiatives focused on sustainability and data gathering across the organization. We also encouraged our Grand Lodges to revitalize their fundraising for Cyclone Harry relief, following the announcement that two community rebuilding projects in Italy have been identified.

On that subject, the Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF), of which I am the Chair, also had a productive meeting, led by SIF President Joseph Sciamè who joined via Zoom, focusing on topics like grant proposals, ongoing maintenance at our SIF-owned National Office in Washington, D.C., and a review of our robust scholarship program. The Foundation Board also reflected on our successful National Education and Leadership Awards (NELA) Gala earlier this year, and continued discussions about our upcoming gala in 2027.

As I look to the months ahead, I remain optimistic for an equally busy and productive season, particularly as we approach Italian-American Heritage and Culture Month in October. As a New York native, I also look forward to the 100th anniversary of the San Gennaro Festival in New York City this month—an incredible celebration that continues to gather thousands of attendees from around the world. I look forward to meeting many of our members and supporters at Italian heritage events this fall, and to see the many contributions of Italian Americans recognized in communities across the country.

Fraternally,

Thomas A. Lupo
National President



State and National Leaders Gather for
OSDIA's 2026 Summer Plenary



OSDIA National President Thomas A. Lupo addresses the attendees of the 2026 Summer Plenary.

On August 13-15, OSDIA leaders and Supreme Council members from around the country gathered for the 2026 Summer Plenary in San Francisco, California.

During the gathering, National Officers, Trustees, Past National Presidents, Grand Lodge Presidents, and Grand Lodge representatives came together to share updates from across the country, address issues of importance to the Order, and discuss how we can build on our 120-year legacy. The meeting was a powerful reminder that our strength comes from working together—with a shared commitment to preserving our heritage, strengthening our organization, and ensuring that the Order continues to thrive for generations to come.

The Sons of Italy Foundation also convened over the weekend, providing updates on fundraising efforts and advancing a range of philanthropic initiatives that reflect our enduring commitment to giving back and making a meaningful difference in the communities we serve.

See below for a few highlights.





OSDIA National President Thomas A. Lupo addresses 2026 Summer Plenary attendees.



Representatives from the OSDIA Grand Lodge of Massachusetts pose for a photo.



Representatives from the OSDIA Grand Lodges of Ohio, Colorado, Illinois/Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Florida pose for a photo.



Plenary attendees pose for a photo after a group dinner in Burlingame, California.



Sellaro and Marconi Award Nominations Open for OSDIA's 2027 Biennial National Convention



Frank Panessa, 2025 Dr. Vincenzo Sellaro Awardee.



Lynn Lawrence-Murphy, 2025 Dr. Vincenzo Sellaro Awardee.



New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli, 2025 Guglielmo Marconi Awardee.

Nominations are now open for the **2027 Dr. Vincenzo Sellaro Award** and **Guglielmo Marconi Awards**, both to be presented at OSDIA's 60th Biennial National Convention (BNC) in Albany, New York next August. These prestigious awards are to be presented in person, so nominees must be present to accept.

The Sellaro Award is the highest honor given to a member of the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America. This award was originally created to honor those who have dedicated their time and effort on behalf of the Order and who have distinguished themselves by exemplifying the ideals and principles of the Order's founder, Dr. Vincenzo Sellaro. In 2025, OSDIA members Frank Panessa and Lynn Lawrence-Murphy received the Sellaro Award and

presented remarks in person to convention guests.

Note: All nominees for the Sellaro Award must be an active *regular* member of the Order, with a minimum of 10 years of membership. Social members, honorary members, and current line officers of the OSDIA Supreme Council are not eligible for this award.

The Guglielmo Marconi Award is the highest award given by the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America. It is presented to an American individual whom OSDIA believes has contributed to our beloved nation and exemplifies OSDIA's creed and way of life, in a manner that best expresses the ideals for which the Order stands. In 2025, Thomas P. DiNapoli, New York State Comptroller, received the Marconi Award and personally addressed convention attendees.

Sellaro Nomination

Marconi Nomination

The nomination deadline for both awards is November 30, 2026 at 11:59 pm ET.



OSDIA Spotlight: Capitolo di Roma Lodge 3002 Participates in Papal Visit



Members of the Capitolo di Roma Lodge 3002 with the OSDIA banner outside St. Peter's Basilica.

On August 5, OSDIA's Capitolo di Roma Lodge 3002 of Rome, Italy, participated in a special papal audience at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City, with members from Sicily, Calabria, and Abruzzo represented at the ceremony.

Over the course of the visit, several members presented Pope Leo XIV with original literary works celebrating Italian American identity and contributions, including Lodge President Carmelo Cutuli and members Fabio Reali and Palmiro Noschese. Member Pietro Viola also presented the Pope with an original painting depicting him during a recent visit to Lampedusa.

"This audience was a moment of great joy for our chapter, and above all a moment of gratitude," said Lodge President Carmelo Cutuli.



Left: Viola posing with his original artwork. Right: Noschese shakes hands with Pope Leo XIV.

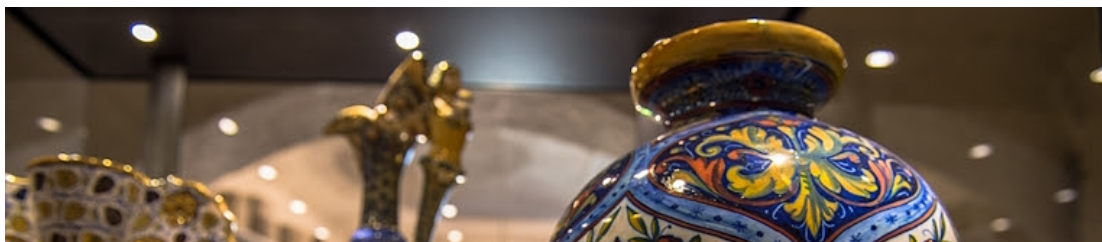
Learn More



Umbria Travel Spotlight

📍 The Ceramic Way | La Strada della Ceramica

Content Courtesy of the Region of Umbria





Lustreware Majolica Vases from Gualdo Tadino.

The “Ceramic Way” is an itinerary that crosses six Umbrian cities with a rich artisanal and artistic tradition.

The first stop is Orvieto, where the Museo Archeologico Nazionale (National Archaeological Museum) houses numerous ceramics of Etruscan origin, such as bucchero pottery, with its unmistakable black color. In the Pozzo della Cava (Cava Well), there are a medieval ceramic workshop and a Renaissance muffle kiln.

The journey continues to Deruta, whose production reached its peak between the late 15th and mid-16th centuries, when local artisans developed the famous “Raffaellesco” decoration. At the Museo Regionale della Ceramica (Regional Ceramics Museum), you can see works that illustrate the importance of this long artisanal tradition.



In Gualdo Tadino, the production of terracotta artifacts dates back to the Roman period, but it became particularly renowned in the 16th century. The Museo Civico Rocca Flea (Rocca Flea Civic Museum) documents the ceramic tradition from the 15th to the 20th century.

The workshop in the Pozzo della Cava.

Another interesting museum is the Museo Opificio Rubboli (Rubboli Factory Museum). Gubbio is famous for its historiated majolica, thanks to Mastro Giorgio, a key figure in the artistic history of the 15th and 16th centuries. His works, along with artifacts dating from the 14th and 15th centuries, are preserved in the Museo Civico Palazzo dei Consoli (Civic Museum of Palazzo dei Consoli).

The itinerary ends in Città di Castello and Umbertide, where a long ceramic tradition has embraced innovation, thanks to the productions started in the early 1900s by the Baldelli and Rometti factories.

Click below to learn more about the Ceramic Way on Umbria's official tourism website.

Learn More

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Our Italian Roots | OSDIA Members Reflect on Their Ancestral Towns

📍 Fonzaso | Province of Belluno | Region of Veneto



The Marcon family welcoming Linda and her family to Fonzaso.

By Linda Mercuri Fischbach

John Pirelli Lodge 1633 | Kettering, OH

Growing up, I heard stories of the hardships my grandparents endured during the Great Depression. My grandfather, Antonio Zucco, left his hometown of Fonzaso, Italy in 1914 to work in the coal mines of western Pennsylvania. In 1928, the miners went on strike, and Tony

sent his wife Adelina (Bracco) and their five children to visit his relatives in Fonzaso. Sadly, the “Crash of 1929” prevented Tony from bringing his family back to the United States until October of 1934. The love and strength of my Italian grandparents kept their family together despite those long 6 1/2 years apart.

My mother, Gloria, recounted being deathly seasick as a 7 year old in steerage class on the 10-day voyage to America. She swore she would never cross the ocean again! But in September 2013, at age 85, she returned with her four grown children and their spouses to Fonzaso.



Linda's sister Lee, her Mom, her brother Gary and Linda in front of the Via Zucco sign.

What a joy to witness my mother, re-experiencing the 400-year-old church bell tower where she made her first communion, visiting her rustic alpine-shuttered *stucco casa* — still standing — where the family cow and goats had occupied the ground floor stable and their “heat” radiated through the rafters to warm the one-room living area. Mom remembered the boys slept in the loft, she in Nonna Maria’s bed, and her mother, Della, on a cot.

Our cousins, the Marcon family, welcomed us warmly with regional food (polenta, swiss chard pie, mushrooms, salami, gnocchi) and grappa. We stayed at the Antico Albergo Sant’Antonio — where the attendee handed us the key to the 8-room hotel’s front door and went home to bed.

We visited family graves in the cemetery and crossed the bridge to see where Nonna had washed clothes in the Cismon river and laid linens on the rocks to dry. We tasted icy cold water flowing from a mountain spring high in the Dolomites, down a stone trough the cousins said the Romans made. We learned “Fon Saxo” in Latin means “Spring of the Rock”, and in Ancient Rome, Fonzaso was the gateway between the Venetian plains and the Alpine regions of Italy – a defensive outpost at the foot of the Dolomites for the Roman road “Via Claudia Augusta” which connected the Po River to the Danube in Germany.

The scenic beauty, the history, and the warmth of the people touched my heart. Before departing, we had our pictures taken at a street sign reading “Via Zucco.” As I was walking back to the hotel alone, a car stopped and asked *me* for directions. Flustered, I blurted out: *Mi dispiace, ma non sono di qui*” (Sorry, I’m not from here). But then I realized—“Yes, yes I *am* from here.”





The St. Anthony Hotel in Fonzaso.



Linda's mother, Gloria Zucco age 4, and her 4 brothers, taken in Fonzaso in 1931.

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.



September Members-Only Webinar: National Literacy Month Spotlight: Tips & Tricks for Running a Lodge Book Club



Don't miss your chance to register for our next members-only webinar on **Tuesday, September 22, 2026 at 1 pm ET** in honor of National Literacy Month, where we will learn from two OSDIA members about their tips and tricks for running a successful local lodge book club and the best books and stories they have come across.

The webinar will feature **Mary Sperrazza**, founder of America Lodge 2245's Il Dolce Libro Book Club in Franklin Square, New York. Sperrazza first began the club in 2021 as a way to contribute to the lodge and bring new life into it. The club became a resounding success. She received a citation from the Town of Hempstead in 2025 for the book club's creation, and the lodge recently received the 2026 Community Engagement Award in recognition of the book club.



Mary Sperrazza



Carolyn Reres

Also featured at the webinar will be **Carolyn Reres**, who is currently serving as an OSDIA National Trustee, Past President of the OSDIA Grand Lodge of New York, and the State Historian of the Grand Lodge of New York. She also served two terms as National Historian. Reres is an original and loyal member of Il Dolce Libro.

In the years since its founding, the club has grown to over 40 active members due to its creativity in keeping members engaged. Their out-of-the-box thinking on how to run club meetings keeps members on their toes. Its success has led to the creation of other lodge clubs including Mah Jongg and Bocce. Lodge membership itself has grown as well, and the community has become close-knit and eager to support one another.

This exclusive webinar will explore how the club came to be, offer practical tips for starting a book club in your own lodge, and inspire you to pick up a new book in celebration of National Literacy Month.

Register today to learn how to build an even stronger community in your lodge.

**Even if you're unsure you can attend live, we encourage you to register*
to receive the recording after the event.**

Register Today!

**Registration will close on Sunday, September 20 at 11:59pm ET.*



Throughout the United States and Italy, OSDIA is home to nearly 400 lodges, and more than 100,000 members and affiliates. Through scholarships, cultural activities, philanthropic efforts, and advocacy on behalf of the Italian American community, our members are making a difference in their communities.



OSDIA Member Receives Prestigious Literary Award from Grand Lodge of New York

SI Live

Dr. Frances R. Curcio recently received the 2026 Literary Award from the OSDIA Grand Lodge of New York. Her 2024 book "Mio Nonno Totore and the American Dream" tells the story of her family's roots in Italy.

Learn More



Italian Heritage Festival returns to Uniontown

Observer-Reporter

The [Giuseppe Mazzini Lodge 231](#) in Uniontown, Pennsylvania hosted its fourth annual Italian heritage festival. The festival featured food, live music performances, and a miniature golf course. The event also hosted its traditional outdoor Mass conducted in Italian.

Learn More



News from the Boot

Check out the latest from Italy!

Why this Sicilian town is Italy's newest art capital

National Geographic

Gibellina in western Sicily has recently been named Italy's first Capital of Contemporary Art. Despite the town's small size, it has become an artistic hub. Throughout the year, a number of exhibitions, performances, and artist residencies will fill the town.



Learn More



Italy unveils a new 1,500 km camino dedicated to Saint Francis of Assisi

Wanted in Rome

Italy's new national tourism route uniting Franciscan trails was recently unveiled by tourism minister Gianmarco Mazzi. The trail connects six regions of Abruzzo, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio, Marche, Tuscany and Umbria. This comes as the 800th anniversary of St. Francis's death approaches later this year.

Learn More

Italian Carabinieri recover stolen Renoir, Cézanne and Matisse artworks worth millions

AP News

Italy has recovered three priceless



masterpieces by Paul Cézanne, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and Henri Matisse nearly five months after they were stolen during a three-minute heist from the Magnani Rocca Foundation near Parma.



[Learn More](#)



Inside iMembersDB

TIPS & TRICKS TO HELP YOU GET THE MOST OUT OF
OSDIA'S OFFICIAL MEMBER MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



How to Access Your OSDIA Member Benefits Using iMembersDB

As a member of OSDIA, you have exclusive access to various products and services, including genealogy research, travel, Italian language instruction, and more. To learn how to access and take full advantages of your member benefits, follow the steps below.

For Local Lodge Members:

1. Navigate to imembersdb.com and log into your account (see the August edition of *Questo Mese* [here](#) for detailed instructions on how to log in).
2. Click the "My Lodge" tab at the top of the screen.
3. Click the "Member Benefits" module*, which will reroute you to a comprehensive list of OSDIA member benefits, featuring discount codes and links for participating companies.

**If you do not see the Member Benefit module, click on the cog wheel in the upper right corner of the page and drag the blue Member Benefit link into the section above (it will turn yellow). Click on "Set My Configuration" to confirm.*

For At-Large Members:

1. Navigate to OSDIA.org, and log into your At-Large Member account dashboard (see the August edition of *Questo Mese* [here](#) for detailed instructions on how to log in).
2. Click "Profile" at the top right of the screen to navigate to your dashboard.
3. At the left-hand column, click the "Member Benefits" button, and select "View Benefits," which will reroute you to a comprehensive list of OSDIA member benefits, featuring discount codes and links for participating companies.

If you have any issues with logging in, please contact your local lodge or reach out to the OSDIA National Office at nationaloffice@osia.org or (202) 547-2900.

Login with iMembersDB

Login with OSDIA.org

Become a Member

About iMembersDB

iMembersDB is OSDIA's official membership management platform. With nearly 400 lodges throughout the United States, and tens of thousands of members, iMembersDB makes it easy to recruit, manage and engage members in one place.

Stay tuned to future editions of Questo Mese for more details on how to get the most out of iMembersDB.



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



SOCIAL MEDIA

Post of the Month



Buona Festa di San Rocco! 🐕🐾

Saint Rocco is one of the most revered patron saints across Southern Italy and Italian American communities alike, spending most of his adult life caring for plague victims in 14th-century Italy. Legend tells that when he fell ill himself, he retreated into a forest, where a faithful dog brought him a fresh loaf of bread every day until he recovered—which is why he is almost always pictured alongside his canine companion.

From small towns in Calabria to vibrant street festivals in New York, Chicago, and Boston, the Feast of Saint Rocco brings neighborhoods together with brass bands, solemn processions, and traditional food.

Does your family or local lodge celebrate the Feast of Saint Rocco? Share your traditions with us in the comments!

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.



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