

# January Questo Mese Newsletter

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

Date Thursday, January 1st, 2026



January | Gennaio 2026

A MESSAGE FROM

## National President, Comm. Thomas A. Lupo



*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

*Buon Anno* and Happy New Year! I hope that you have all had an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season. As we enter 2026, I am filled with a sense of accomplishment for all that we have achieved this past year, and a sense of optimism for what lies ahead.

This year has been successful in more ways than one. To start with, it was a pleasure celebrating the beautiful Region of Lombardy throughout 2025, honoring its cuisine, culture and traditions, not to mention its role as a thriving hub of international business.

This partnership was further celebrated at our National Education and Leadership Awards (NELA) Gala this past May, in which we honored the region's President, Attilio Fontana, with our prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award in International Leadership.

Also at our 2025 NELA Gala, we announced a historic partnership with the Swiss School of Management, offering two full-tuition scholarships for its bachelor's and master's degrees in Business Administration in Rome. These scholarships, along with our 2026 SIF scholarships, are now open until February 27, 2026! Click [here](#), or read further in this newsletter, for more details on how to apply.

On another exciting note, the Sons of Italy Foundation Board welcomed its two newest trustees this past month: Giancarlo Arra and Dr. Pierpaolo Sileri, who joined Michael D'Amore as our first Italy-based trustees. This is an exciting development for the Foundation, allowing us to expand our important philanthropic efforts on a global scale.

On the subject of growth, I am honored to welcome Peachtree Lodge 3018 of Sandy Springs, Georgia, to our OSDIA family. The Peachtree Lodge joins two other lodges that were formed this year, including Charlotte Lodge 3016 of Charlotte, North Carolina, and Rainier Lodge 3019 of Parkland, Washington.

In the coming weeks, we will be finalizing the formation of two additional lodges, with dozens in the pipeline for the future.

While we are experiencing steady membership growth, I am happy to report similar growth at our National Office in Washington, D.C. In addition to welcoming Justin Smith back to our National Office staff as Managing Director this past August, we have also recently welcomed a new bookkeeper, Victory Ejim, to our team in Washington, D.C. I would like to thank OSDIA's National Executive Director, Shayla Kaestle for her incredible leadership in steering this growth.

On a similar note, I am excited to announce the important work that our 2025-2027 committees are doing at a national level to benefit this organization. Whether it's new lodge formation, membership management, promoting the Italian language and culture, or assisting with national fundraising events, I am looking forward to working with the dedicated members who make up our national committees across the U.S. and in Italy, and to achieve strategic goals throughout the new year. I am also excited to announce the addition of Don Cimorelli as our Committee Performance Advisor, a new volunteer role tasked with supporting our committees' strategic planning process and progress tracking.

While I close out my first message of 2026, I want to take a moment to thank you, our members and supporters, for the role you play every day to promote and preserve our shared heritage. I would also like to recognize National Immediate Past President Michael G. Polo for his stellar leadership this past year, and for his efforts to strengthen our relationship with Italy and the Italian government. I look forward to building on that momentum throughout the rest of my term.

Fraternally,

Comm. Thomas A. Lupo

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



# OSDIA Elects New Sons of Italy Foundation® Trustees



*Giancarlo Arra*



*Dr. Pierpaolo Sileri*

On Dec. 6, the Supreme Council of the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America® (OSDIA) elected two new trustees to its philanthropic arm, the Sons of Italy Foundation® (SIF). Giancarlo Arra and Dr. Pierpaolo Sileri officially join the recently elected Michael D'Amore as the Foundation's first Italy-based trustees. Both trustees bring a wealth of experience in institutional leadership, widely recognized as leaders in their respective fields.

Arra, based in Naples, Italy, currently serves as the President of SHRO ITA and the Vice President of SHRO USA, an internationally recognized nonprofit medical research organization. Dr. Pierpaolo Sileri, based in Milan, Italy, is a renowned surgeon and educator, having previously served as the Deputy Minister of Health and Senator of the Italian Republic, and currently as a Full Professor of Surgery at Vita-Salute San Raffaele University in Milan.

The addition of Arra and Sileri to the SIF Board of Trustees comes after a vote this past August during OSDIA's 59th Biennial National Convention to increase the Foundation's total number of trustees during the 2025-2027 term.

To read the full press release, click the button below.

[Read the Full Release](#)



## Peachtree Lodge 3018 Instituted in

# Sandy Springs, Georgia



*From left to right: Dan Kaestle, Dr. Mark DeNunzio, Joe Dolgetta, Vincent Fauceglia and Don Cimorelli pose for a photo with Peachtree Lodge 3018's charter.*

The Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America (OSDIA) proudly welcomed its newest lodge, Peachtree Lodge 3018 of Sandy Springs, Georgia, which was officially instituted on Nov. 2, 2025. The ceremony marked an exciting milestone for OSDIA's continued growth in the Southeast and celebrated the dedication of the lodge's founding members.

Two of the lodge's founders—President Joseph Dolgetta and member Michael Gembala—were present in person for the ceremony. The third founder, Tonino Rizzico, participated via video call from Palermo, Italy, bringing a special international connection to the occasion.

The institution ceremony was conducted by Dr. Mark DeNunzio, National 2nd Vice President, who formally established the lodge, initiated 20 new members, and installed the newly elected officers. Assisting in the ceremonies were Dan Kaestle, Chair of the New Lodge Formation Committee and President of Buona Fortuna Lodge 2835 in Pensacola, FL, Vincent Fauceglia, Co-Chair of the New Lodge Formation Committee and President of Charlotte Lodge 3016 and Don Cimorelli, President of Triangle Lodge 2817 of Raleigh/Durham, NC, all of whom traveled to support and welcome the newest addition to the OSDIA family.

Following the official proceedings, attendees enjoyed a sumptuous Italian buffet generously prepared by members of the new lodge—an immediate testament to their enthusiasm, hospitality and Italian

American spirit.

Peachtree Lodge 3018 has already demonstrated the passion and determination that promise a bright future. With fundraising initiatives and community activities already underway, the lodge is poised to become a vibrant and impactful presence in the Sandy Springs area.

OSDIA congratulates President Dolgetta, the founding members and all new lodge members on this important beginning, and looks forward to supporting their continued growth and success.



## Italian Cuisine Added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List



### **A historic honor for Italy!**

On December 10, Italian cuisine was added to UNESCO's [Intangible Cultural Heritage](#) list, an internationally recognized honor that highlights more than recipes, but also the centuries of traditions and customs passed down from generation to generation. While other individual dishes have been recognized by UNESCO, Italy is the first country to ever to be recognized for its national cuisine.

"It is a historic recognition that honors the Italian people, celebrates our identity and exalts lifestyle love throughout the world," said Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in a video address.

"For us, Italian cuisine is not just food or a collection of recipes. It is much more than that. It is culture, tradition, work and wellbeing," she added.

To listen to Prime Minister Meloni's full speech about this recognition, click the button below.

[Listen Here](#)

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## 2026 Sons of Italy Foundation Scholarships Now Open!



*Gianluca McKenna, an SIF scholarship recipient, poses for a photo on stage at the 2025 National Education and Leadership Awards Gala in Washington, D.C., flanked by Eldora Perfilio, SIF Trustee, and Anthony J. Perfilio, Esq., OSDIA National Orator.*

**Applications for the Sons of Italy Foundation's (SIF) National Leadership Grants are open for 2026!**

These merit-based scholarships vary from \$5,000-\$20,000 each year and are given to selected individuals\* of Italian descent\*\*, enrolled in 4-year undergraduate programs, graduate programs, or professional schools at an accredited academic institution for the Fall 2026 term.

Applications will close on **February 27th, 2026**, so get your application started today! For more information and details on applying, please click on the button below:

[Apply Here](#)

*\* U.S. Citizens and Green Card holders*

*\* At least one Italian or Italian American grandparent*



## **OSDIA & SSM Rome Announce Two Full-Tuition Scholarships**



*Photo courtesy of the Swiss School of Management.*

**Apply Now for Full-Tuition Business Scholarships in Rome!**

The Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America® (OSDIA) and the Sons of Italy Foundation® (SIF) are proud to partner with the Swiss School of Management (SSM) in Rome, to offer two full-tuition scholarships for outstanding students of Italian descent pursuing business degrees at SSM's Rome campus, starting in fall 2026.

In addition to SSM's Rome campus, students also have the opportunity to visit SSM's Milan and Brescia campuses in the Lombardy Region, which is a leading hub of international business, and OSDIA's 2025 Region of Celebration.

Each scholarship covers full tuition for either the Bachelor of Business Administration or the Master of Business Administration program (housing and living expenses not included).

These awards celebrate the proud legacy of Italian and Italian American achievements while empowering the next generation of global business leaders. Click the button below to learn more and apply!

[Learn More & Apply](#)



## **OSDIA Spotlight: North Carolina Lodge President Honored for Leadership and Innovation**



*Don Cimorelli, President of Triangle Lodge 2817, poses for a photo with his award.*

Don Cimorelli, President of Triangle Lodge 2817 in Raleigh, North Carolina, was presented a special honor this past month by the lodge's Board of Directors for his leadership and role in expanding lodge membership.

Cimorelli was recognized specifically for his role in growing the lodge from 95 members to more than 400. He was also recognized for his strong engagement in the greater Raleigh area, where he has hosted more than 50 events annually.



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

## 📍 Casacalenda, Campobasso | Region of Molise



*Eldora Perfilio (left) poses for a photo with her family in Casacalenda.*

**By Eldora Perfilio**

**John Pirelli Lodge 1633 | Dayton, Ohio**

Returning with my grandchildren to my town of birth was an unforgettable connection between my present and my past. As we were walking through my ancestral village, our granddaughter spotted a street sign that had our family name and she shouted “Nonna, Nonna, that’s your name up there!” I hugged her and responded “Yes, Lidia, we really are from here.” There was such a sense of connection at that moment for both her and me! As Italian Americans, we are all connected to those ancestral roots. Now she had a connection too!

I was born in the small municipality of Casacalenda, Campobasso, in the region of Molise and immigrated to the US in 1954 at the age of 7. It is a rural, hilltop village located about 20 minutes west of the Adriatic Sea. The town’s original name, Kalen, was first mentioned in a story about Hannibal, who was said to have camped in that area during the Second Punic War (218-203 B.C.).

At one time its population was well over 7,000, but now, due to immigration, it barely reaches 2,000. Like many of us, I was part of that immigration story. Nevertheless, I have stayed connected to it in my family traditions, stories, recipes, and visits back whenever possible. Time spent with cousins, visits to

places that revive childhood memories, and enjoying the absolute peace and quiet of the place that used to be my home make every visit special.

Taking photos with our children and grandchildren in front of our family home was like stepping back in time. There we were on the very same spot where I was photographed as a child!



*Eldora's granddaughter points to a street sign with their family name.*



*A photograph of Eldora (right) as a child in Casacalenda.*



*A photo of Casacalenda at night.*

*"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. Submissions from OSDIA members for this project will be requested in 2026.*



## **OSDLA Represented at #America250 Event at Ambassador's Residence**



*From left to right: OSDIA Managing Director Justin Smith and  
OSDLA National Immediate Past President Michael G. Polo.*



*Ambassador Marco Peronaci and America250 Chair Rosie Rios sign a memorandum of understanding at Villa Firenze.*

On December 10, Ambassador of Italy to the U.S. Marco Peronaci hosted a special gathering at his residence, Villa Firenze, on the occasion of the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in Support of the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America.

The Memorandum was signed between the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, highlighting the deep historical and cultural ties between the two nations.

National Immediate Past President Michael G. Polo and Managing Director Justin Smith were proud to represent OSDIA during the event, which included discussions on the history of U.S.-Italy relations and the role Italian immigrants have played in shaping American society.



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.



*"Sons of Italy Foundation: Arra e Sileri in nuova stagione nei rapporti USA-Italia"*

**Informare**

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[Read More](#)



*Loggia Glen Cove Recognizes Student Achievement*

**Patch**

On Dec. 3, members, trustees and supporters gathered at Loggia Glen Cove Lodge 1016 in Long Island, New York to celebrate two local students for their "creativity, thoughtful expression, and engagement with Italian-American heritage."

[Read More](#)



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



**Calling all local lodge leaders!**

In advance of local lodge elections, official OSDIA membership pins, regalia 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



VS



## Italian Heritage Celebration!

Sunday, January 11

@ 3PM



Join the NBA's Orlando Magic for their first Italian Heritage Celebration at the Orlando Magic vs. New Orleans Pelicans game on January 11 at 3:00 PM ET at the Kia Center in Orlando, FL!

Celebrate your Italian heritage while enjoying an exciting NBA matchup and creating unforgettable memories. Don't forget to wear your Tricolore colors with your Magic gear!

Take advantage of your exclusive discount by clicking the button below or using the QR code! For information on renting a private suite for this game, reach out to Alessandro Perrier at (407) 916-2409 or [aperrier@orlandomagic.com](mailto:aperrier@orlandomagic.com)

[Click Here for Discount](#)



## Writers Wanted

**Interested in writing for OSDIA's official magazine?**

**We want to hear from you!**



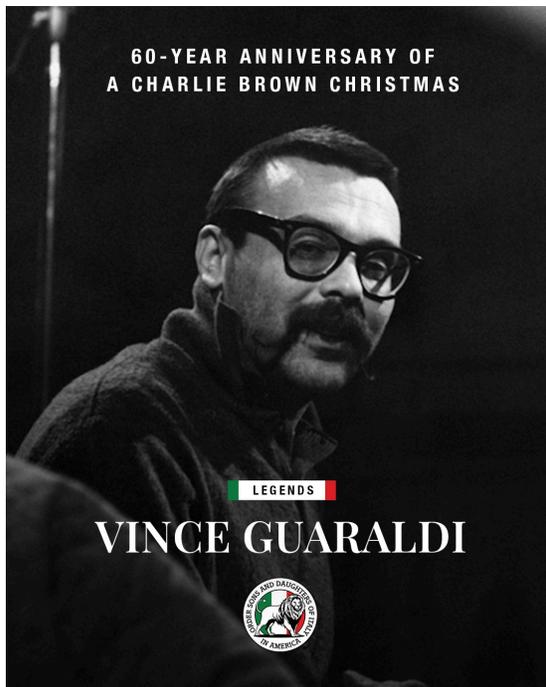
Do you have a story idea highlighting the impactful work of an OSDIA member or lodge in their community? Are you interested in writing for the most widely read magazine for people of Italian heritage in the United States? We want to hear from you! For consideration in *Italian America* magazine, which has a circulation of more than 25,000, and a readership of more than 100,000 each quarter, please submit your story pitches to [italianamerica@osia.org](mailto:italianamerica@osia.org).

Story pitches should be limited to 250 words and address topics pertinent to the Italian American community. Preference will be given to story ideas featuring OSDIA members or lodges, but all stories of interest to the Italian American community will be considered.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

# Post of the Month



#OnThisDay in 1965, A Charlie Brown Christmas first aired, launching a beloved holiday tradition — now celebrating its 50th anniversary. Much of its magic came from Italian American jazz pianist Vince Guaraldi of San Francisco, whose original compositions and smooth renditions of Christmas standards are now synonymous with the season.

Guaraldi's music isn't just present at Christmas; it fills the airwaves from October through December, as the success of this special inspired The Peanuts to create a string of classic holiday films. Decades later, the special still reminds us of the simple, timeless meaning of Christmas. 🎄 ❄️

#CharlieBrownChristmas #VinceGuaraldi  
#50Years #ChristmasClassics #HolidayMusic  
#ItalianAmerican #Peanuts #ChristmasSpirit

[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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