

# March Questo Mese Newsletter

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

Date Monday, March 2nd, 2026



March | Marzo 2026

A MESSAGE FROM

**National President, Comm. Thomas A. Lupo**



*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

As we move into March, I am proud of the continued momentum and engagement we are seeing across our Order. February was a productive and meaningful month for our national leadership, and I am grateful for the dedication of our officers and members who work each day to strengthen our organization and uphold our proud Italian heritage.

On February 20 and 21, the OSDIA Supreme Council convened for our semiannual leadership meeting. These meetings provide an important opportunity for our National Officers to share

updates, review progress, and collaborate on initiatives that guide the future of our Order.

Together, we engaged in lively discussions on membership growth, philanthropy, and long-term planning to ensure that OSDIA remains strong and relevant for generations to come. In particular, we initiated a planned collaboration among the four committees that focus on various areas of membership with a shared commitment to working more closely in conjunction to establish goals focused on sustainable membership growth and retention.

Our conversation on philanthropy included a passionate discussion on the importance of ensuring that Cyclone Harry Relief Funds reach the communities and individuals most in need, reinforcing our responsibility to deliver meaningful and timely impact through our charitable efforts.

Equally important was the focus on leadership and organizational strength. I conveyed the critical role our Vice Presidents play in leading the organization and elaborated on my efforts to help develop them into strong leaders for the future of our Order. I would be remiss not to specifically acknowledge the leadership of National Executive Director Shayla Kaestle, whose guidance, dedication, and strategic vision continue to be instrumental in advancing initiatives and aligning our efforts across the organization. Strong leadership and collaboration are essential to our continued success, and I am confident in the direction we are moving.

February also brought great excitement as the world turned its attention to the Milano-Cortina Winter Olympics. Italy delivered a historic performance as a host, setting a record for medals won and showcasing the resilience, excellence, and competitive spirit that define the Italian people. At the same time, Team USA delivered an impressive show, highlighting that the shared pride we feel as Italian Americans remains unwavering.

During February, I also had the honor of participating in a meeting with Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Antonio Tajani, and the Ambassador of Italy to the United States, Marco Peronaci, at the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C. Maintaining close ties with the Italian government is vital to our mission as the oldest and largest organization for men and women of Italian heritage in the United States, especially during times of struggle.

As many of you know, Southern Italy continues to recover from the devastating impact of Cyclone Harry. The destruction has been severe, with nearly \$2 billion in damages and countless families affected. In times of hardship, our Order has always answered the call to help. The Sons of Italy Foundation has recently launched a national relief effort to assist with rebuilding and recovery in Italy. I encourage you all to support in any way you can, whether it be participating in local lodge fundraisers or by clicking [here](#) to make an online donation. Every dollar helps. Together, we can once again demonstrate the strength and compassion of our OSDIA family. More information on our fundraising campaign and collaboration with the Italian government can be found further in the newsletter.

As we begin the month of March, we also recognize Women's History Month, a time to celebrate the extraordinary contributions of women throughout history and especially within our own Order. From lodge leadership to national initiatives, the women of OSDIA continue to shape our future with dedication, resilience, and vision. Their commitment to service, culture, philanthropy, and mentorship strengthens our organization at every level, and we are proud to honor their impact this month and always.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that tickets and sponsorship opportunities are now available for our 37th National Education and Leadership Awards (NELA) Gala, which will be held on May 28, 2026, at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C. More information can be found further in the newsletter.

Thank you all for your continued dedication to our mission and to our Order.

Fraternally,

Comm. Thomas A. Lupo

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



## Tickets and Sponsorships Now on Sale! 37th Annual National Education and Leadership Award Gala

Thursday, May 28, 2026 | Washington, D.C.



Join us on **Thursday, May 28th** at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C. for our 37th **National Education and Leadership Awards**

(NELA) Gala!

We will honor individuals whose meaningful contributions have positively impacted their communities and beyond, while also highlighting the promising future of our Italian American youth and the impactful work of the Sons of Italy Foundation.

We invite you to be part of an evening that celebrates our community while investing in the next generation. Secure your tickets and explore sponsorship opportunities today.

[Purchase Tickets](#)

[Become a Sponsor](#)



## **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, 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.”

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.

*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.*

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

**Donate Here**



## **OSDIA Members-Only Webinar: The Timeless Art of Italian Pottery**

**Tuesday, March 24 | 3:00 pm ET**



*From left to right: Maria and her daughter, Caterina, pose with their pottery.*

[Learn more about Materia Ceramica](#)

Join us on **Tuesday, March 24th at 3:00pm ET** for an exclusive members-only webinar exploring the artistry and tradition behind Italian pottery.

Joining us as our special guests are Maria Antonietta Taticchi, a classically trained ceramic artist, and her daughter and fellow artist, Caterina Aquinardi, of Materia Ceramica in Perugia, Umbria.

During this engaging webinar, participants will receive a behind-the-scenes look at the process of creating traditional Italian ceramics and learn how techniques have evolved to incorporate modern styles and contemporary design.

Maria Antonietta and Caterina will share insights into their artistic approaches, craftsmanship, and the inspiration behind their shop located in the historic heart of Perugia.



*A photo from a pottery workshop hosted by Materia Ceramica.*

Whether you are passionate about Italian art, heritage, or simply curious about the ceramic-making process, this session will offer a unique opportunity to connect with artisans preserving and reimagining a treasured Italian craft.

Even if you're not sure you can attend, register anyway to receive the recording.

Registration will close on March 22, 2026, at 11:59 pm ET.

Click the button below to register. We look forward to having you attend the event!

[Register Here](#)



## OSDIA Leadership Welcomes Philadelphia Consul General & Discusses Strategic Collaboration



*From left to right: Steve Mancini, Honorary Consul of Pittsburgh and Italian Government Relations Subcommittee Chair, Nico Frandi, Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia, Shayla Kaesle, OSDIA National Executive Director, and James Santilli, President of the OSDIA State Lodge of Pennsylvania.*

On Thursday, February 26, OSDIA National Executive Director Shayla Kaestle and OSDIA State Lodge of Pennsylvania President James Santilli met with Nico Frandi, Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia, and Steve Mancini, Honorary Consul of Pittsburgh and OSDIA Italian Government Relations Subcommittee Chair.

During the meeting, which took place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Kaestle and Santilli welcomed Consul General Frandi to the position and engaged in dialogue about how OSDIA can work with the Consulate General to achieve shared strategic goals in the coming years. Among the topics of discussion were:

- Maintaining a **visible and sustained Italian presence** in Pennsylvania.
- Launching **business networking opportunities** for Italian and Italian American professionals in the region.
- **Promoting awareness of Italian and Italian American history during this year's America250 celebrations.**
- **Supporting Italian language instruction and roots tourism initiatives.**
- **Enhancing collaboration among the Consul General, his honorary consulates, and OSDIA lodges within his jurisdiction.**

"It was a pleasure to meet in-person with the Consul General and to formally welcome him to this important role, said Kaestle. "As the largest and oldest Italian American organization in the U.S., we deeply value building strong relationships with the Italian government and its consular network in the United States. We look forward to continuing a fruitful relationship with Consul General Frandi, who represents millions of Italian Americans across seven U.S. states."

Consul General Frandi is a career diplomat with more than 25 years of experience. Appointed to the position on October 6, 2025, Frandi is responsible for overseeing the Italian consular network across Pennsylvania, Delaware, North Carolina, West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey.

For more information about the new Consul General and to read his welcome message, [click here](#).



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

📍 **Comune di Biccari | Region of Puglia, Province of Foggia**



*From left to right: Richard Leto and the mayor of the Comune di Biccari, Antonio Beatrice (2025).*



*Richard Leto in front of his grandfather's house in Biccari (2022).*

**By Richard Leto**

### **Columbus Lodge 2599 | Columbus, Ohio**

My name is Richard Leto, I am a member of the Columbus Lodge 2599 in Columbus, Ohio, and I would like to tell you a bit about where my Italian roots lie in Italy. I have visited my ancestral town several times, where my maternal grandparents Aniello and Elisa (nee Basile) Lucera emigrated from Comune di Biccari (Region of Puglia – Province of Foggia) to America back in 1902/1910, respectively. Both my paternal and maternal Italian immigrant grandparents were part of the mass migration referred to as the “Great Arrival” to America. They settled in the Little Italy enclave of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where I was born and raised. Biccari is about a two-hour drive from Naples, and a one-hour drive east of Biccari lies the Adriatic Sea.

Over the years, my cousins and I have met many distant family relatives who treat us like royalty when we visit Biccari. For me, walking through the streets and alleyways of the village is a magical, emotional journey that, when I reflect upon it, I could be walking on the same ground as my grandparents once did over one-hundred years ago.

One highlight I make on every trip of mine is seeing the house where my grandfather Aniello lived. My visits always include taking part in the historic festa/procession of San Donato, the patron saint of Biccari, along with just sitting and socializing in the town's main piazza. Other places I visit include Biccari's medieval tower, the mother church of Biccari, my distant cousin's olive oil factory, and even the town cemetery. The mayor and the parish priest always welcome us on our visit. The surrounding area of Biccari has fields of grain, olive groves, and sunflowers.



*Richard Leto and Padre Don Leonardo Catalano at the San Donato Festa (2025).*

Visiting the town of my Italian roots is truly a heartwarming experience and makes for so many wonderful memories.

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.*



## Milano-Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics: Italy Shines on Home Snow



The world gathered in February for the unforgettable Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics, as Italy proudly hosted the Winter Games for the first time since 1956. Against the backdrop of Milan and the Dolomites, the Olympic Games delivered historic performances, victories, and displays of national pride.

**Team Italy** rose to the occasion on their own home soil, capturing medals across multiple sports and setting a national record with 10 gold medals and a total of 30 podium finishes, their best Winter Games performance ever. Italian speed skaters Davide Ghiotto, Andrea Giovannini, and Michele Malfatti clinched gold in the men's team pursuit, along with many other memorable wins for the host nation.

**Team USA** also delivered a standout performance, earning medals across figure skating, mixed aerials (freestyle skiing team event), and hockey. American figure skater Alysa Liu won gold in women's singles figure skating, marking the first U.S. victory in the event in 24 years. On the ice, both the American hockey teams made headlines, with the Men's and Women's teams winning gold medals, marking one of the program's strongest Olympic showings in years.

From the Opening Ceremony in Milan to the Closing Ceremony in Verona, Italy showcased its culture, hospitality, and passion to a global audience. A historic Winter Olympics has come to a close, and both Italy and the United States leave with pride and unforgettable moments that go down in Olympic history.



**News from the Boot**

## Check out the latest from Italy!

### ***"Italy's famous Lovers' Arch collapses into the sea on Valentine's Day"***

**The Guardian**

On February 14th, 2026, Italy saw the unexpected collapse of the "Lovers' Arch," a historic structure known for symbolizing romance and tradition. Located in Puglia, the arch had long been a sentimental site for couples and visitors. Fortunately, no serious injuries were reported.



[Learn More](#)



### ***"Venice Carnival 2026: The Most Beautiful Chaos in Europe"***

**Dolcevia**

In February 2025, the *Carnevale di Venezia* once again transformed Venice into a dreamlike city of elaborate masks, historic costumes, and lively street performances. For two weeks, the city's piazzas and canals filled with visitors from around the world, celebrating one of Italy's most iconic and theatrical traditions.

[Learn More](#)

***"Sanremo: A song contest that defines Italian pop culture"***

**Wanted in Rome**

From February 24-28, 2026, the legendary Sanremo Music Festival once again captivated the nation from the stage of the Teatro Ariston. As Italy's longest-running televised music competition, the festival celebrated its 76th edition with a blend of iconic performers, rising stars, and the traditional path to Eurovision Song Contest.



[Learn More](#)



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.



*"The Wakefield Sons & Daughters of Italy Are Planning Fun Events"*



*"Sons and Daughters of Italy serving up Irish luncheon"*

## Patch

Wakefield Lodge 1734 in Wakefield, Massachusetts, will resume monthly meetings on March 10 and also announced it will host local author and historian Stephen Puleo as a guest speaker on May 12, with additional social events planned throughout 2026.

[Read More](#)

## Daily Republic

In Fairfield, California, Northern Solano Lodge 2534 announced it will be hosting its annual Luck O' the Irish luncheon at noon on March 12 at the Adult Recreation Center.

[Read 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](#)



## February 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!

- **100 Years:** Joseph Gorassi Lodge 1406 | Woburn, MA
- **50 Years:** Vince Lombardi Lodge 2357 | West Warwick, RI



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



**Calling all local lodge leaders!**

All official OSDIA membership pins, banners, 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



## Writers Wanted

Interested in writing for OSDIA's official magazine?

We want to hear from you!



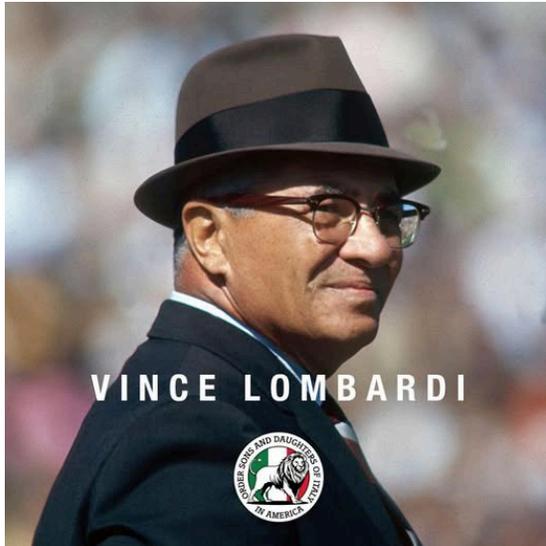
Do you have a story idea highlighting the impactful work of an OSDIA member or lodge in their community? Are you interested in writing for the most widely read magazine for people of Italian heritage in the United States? We want to hear from you! For consideration in *Italian America* magazine, which 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



Happy **#SuperBowlSunday!**

Vince Lombardi, born to Italian immigrants in Brooklyn on June 11, 1913, is one of the most iconic figures in American football. As head coach of the Green Bay Packers, he led the team to five NFL championships and two Super Bowl victories, forever changing the game with his emphasis on discipline, leadership, and relentless pursuit of excellence. His famous saying, “Winning isn’t everything; it’s the only thing,” became a rallying cry for teams across the league.

Lombardi's impact went beyond just strategy—he instilled a work ethic that raised the standards for future generations of players and coaches. In recognition of his profound influence on the sport, the Super Bowl trophy is named in his honor, a testament to his legacy.

[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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