



Amici d'Italia

Lodge 2791 Jacksonville, Florida

Volume 2 - Issue 13

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The Amici Newsletter April 2025

FROM THE PRESIDENT....

Our April General Meeting on Friday April 25 is our annual Frank Purpura Memorial Scholarship dinner and celebration. The Lodge is most proud of the work of the Committee and of our two scholarship recipients: Jack Liuzzo of Bishop Kenny High School (Duval) and Kate Vitori, of Fernandina Beach High School (Nassau). For those who cannot attend, included in this Newsletter are their respective essays.

Please accept all good wishes for a Blessed Palm Sunday, faith filled Holy Week, Triduum and joyful Easter Sunday.

Our May meeting will honor our Mothers and Aunts and Sisters and Daughters. We will also have a special presentation of our up and running website: ItaliainJax.org.

We are continuing to Promote our shared culture, Preserve the best of our heritage and Protect our reputation through our Committee on Social Justice. We have so much of which to be proud.

Annette



ABOUT US



The Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America® (OSDIA) is the largest and oldest national organization for men and women of Italian heritage in the United States. Founded in 1905 as a mutual aid society for early Italian immigrants, today OSDIA has thousands of family members located in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, making it the leading service and advocacy organization for the nation's estimated 26 million people of Italian descent. Our missions include encouraging the study of Italian language and culture in American schools and universities; preserving Italian American traditions, culture, history and heritage; and promoting closer cultural relations between the United States and Italy.



April Birthdays



- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 4 Joseph Pecorella | 20 Mary Ouellette |
| 5 Phyllis Callaghan | 20 David Burroughs |
| 6 Nancy Rongstad | 21 De Santapola |
| 16 Tony Di Domenico | 26 Georgianne Pionessa |
| 18 Kathleen Guiliano | 29 Margie Rimmer |



Welcome our new member Madaline Gagliano sworn in by Past President Mark Gregorio





The Amici Newsletter Lodge 2791 April 2025

Information, Activities and Updates

Meetings Mailing Address Contact Information



- Council meets 1st Tuesday of the month.
- Lodge meets the 3rd Friday of the month at 6:30pm at *Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran Church 7860 Southside Blvd, Jacksonville Florida 32256. Next Meeting April 25, 2025*
- Mail address: *Amici D'Italia Lodge 2791 PO Box 8985 Jacksonville, Fl 32239-8985*
- President: *Annette Guarino email annette57@aol.com phone 914-548-7821*
- Newsletter: *Sal Santapola email saldesanta@gmail.com phone 904-887-8758*
- Compassion: *Georgianne Pionessa email ajp19@comcast.net phone 904-727-7112.*
- Webmaster: www.italiainjax.org *Giancarlo Zepeda email support@pendabrytemetal.com*



The book club meets periodically at 6:30pm at *Margie Rimmer's home, 7410 Buckskin Trail North, Jacksonville, Fl 32277. Next Meeting to be announced.*

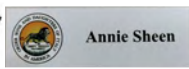
Book Discussion: *The Sicilian Inheritance by Jo Piazza.*

Chair Leader *Cheryl Callavini 904-744-1779*

RSVP to attend 904-866-8527



Golf Shirt/Name Tag



Golf Shirt - Cost \$25 - Name Tags Cost is \$13

Contact *Annie Sheen* for Golf Shirt or Name Tags. Anniesheen@comcast.net

Italian Heritage Cook Book - \$20 - Purchase at the general meeting.

Scholarship



Scholarships - Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America

National Leadership Grants – General Information Through the Sons of Italy Foundation® (SIF), and tens of thousands of family members located in all fifty states and the District of Columbia, the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America® (OSDIA) has awarded tens of millions of dollars in scholarships to date. The Foundation is excited to support more talented youth to achieve their dreams. Scholarship applications for next year: Go to web page - www.osdia.org/scholarships/

Committees



We continue to reach out for volunteers to assist on each committee which are the following: **Fraternity, Philanthropy, Membership, Culture, Finance & Communications.**

Committees established and are on going are: Fraternity, Finance, Philanthropy (Charities & Scholarship). Contact *Sal Santapola @ saldesanta@gmail.com* if you are interested in volunteering.

Night out Social Sakura Thursday March 27, 6pm



A great attendance attended at *Sakura Japanese Resturant* enjoying fellowship and great food.



Save the Date

Salvare
La
data

April 25 General Meeting 6:30pm—Scholarship Program

May 6 Council Meeting 6:30pm

July 19 Tea Party at IAC - Additional details to follow

October 4 Bocce at IAC - Stay tuned for more information



An Italian American Tradition – St Joseph’S Day March 19th Celebrated at our General Meeting on March 21, 2025

St. Patrick may get all the attention with the famous parades and green beer, but for most Italian Americans it means only two more days until **St. Joseph’s Day**.

The tradition was brought over with the first immigrants and is still celebrated in both the old Italian American neighborhoods in the big cities and households nationwide. Every March 19, Italian Americans across the country will be sitting down to one of our favorite feasts.

The event commemorates the fatherly example of Saint Joseph and gives occasion for **celebrating the bonds of the family**. This Celebration in Italy, The Feast of St Joseph, or La Festa San Giuseppe, honors St. Joseph. It is also the day in which Italy celebrates Father’s Day.

In Sicily, the celebration takes center stage. During the Middle Ages, there was a severe drought, and the people prayed for the patron saint to bring them rain. They promised that if God answered their prayers through Joseph’s intercession, they would prepare a large feast to honor him. The rain came and the people of Sicily prepared a large banquet for St. Joseph. The FAVA bean was the crop which saved the population from starvation.

A traditional “altar” or St. Joseph’s Table is filled with gifts, both of food and sentimental ones, offered to the saint in thanksgiving. Generally, a statue of St. Joseph is placed at the head of the table is surrounded by gifts and various foods.

The table should be set up as the tradition of St. Joseph altar symbolic of the Trinity. With Easter Lilies (represents purity, virtue, and humility) covered with bread, cakes, and cookies.

Amici Di Lodge 2791 has been doing this for years and thank you all that supplied the food, desserts and setting on St Joseph’s Table.



Fava Beans



St. Joseph’s Table



Decorations
on the Tables

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March 21, 2025 FRIDAY GENERAL MEETING Celebrating St Joseph's Day



At our general meeting, 70 members and guests celebrated St. Joseph's Day enjoying ravioli, with traditional foods and desserts, lovingly prepared by our members. It was a wonderful and festive gathering enjoyed by all.



De Santapola giving instructions on Heads & Tails Game

Winner Rose Maher of Heads & Tails Game



My Fair Lady is the quintessential classic musical based on the classic story of Pygmalian. This timeless musical boasts songs like **Wouldn't It Be Lovely**, **I Could Have Danced All Night** and **The Rain in Spain**.

SATURDAY MATINEE JUNE 21, 2025

Dinner from 12pm to 1:40pm - Performance 1:50pm

We have booked **seventy-two seats** for this performance. Everyone enjoyed going to Alhambra Theatre for a pleasant time with a Broadway Show, dining, and fellowship.

\$73.00 per person including gratuity

We sold 40 tickets to date and only have 32 left.

Make Check Payable to OSDIA (sons and daughters of Italy)

**We will sell tickets at the meeting in April or
email me and I will reserve your seats.**

saldesanta@gmail.com

Easter: How does Italy celebrate this festivity?

Source - <https://www.ellci.net/easter-how-does-italy-celebrate-this-festivity/>



Easter is one of the most important holidays of the year in Italy, it marks the beginning of warm-season and outdoor activities. Popular festivals, village festivals, concerts, religious rites and processions are just some of the events organized during this period.

This year Easter falls high. The Easter date is variable since it coincides with the Sunday following the spring full moon. According to this rule, it is said that Easter is low if it falls from 22 March to 2 April, average from 3 to 13 April, high from 14 to 25 April.

How does Italy celebrate Easter? From north to south, especially the Good Friday Passion has inspired numerous and heartfelt rituals that include processions, re-enactments and staging.

Find out how Italy celebrates Easter

The celebrations of Easter begin the previous Sunday, to remember the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, which was welcomed by the waving of palm leaves. On this day it is not uncommon to see families and children returning home with olive branches blessed in the church (in the absence of palm trees). Thus begins the Holy Week during which various rites are held. Thursday remembers the recurrence of the Last Supper and of the “Eucharistic celebration”.

Good Friday is the day of *Via Crucis*: the streets light up with torches and are crossed by processions that retrace the process, the ordeal and the death of Jesus.

On Saturday at midnight, the bells announce the Resurrection. Sunday is the most important day, Lent, the long period of fasting, is over: colorful eggs, dove-shaped cakes and chocolate eggs are distributed. The egg, symbol of life that renews itself and hopes for fruitfulness, is connected to the meaning of Easter as the feast of spring and the awakening of nature.

In Italy, the so-called Monday of the Angel -Easter Monday – Little Easter or *Pasquetta* – is the last day of celebration. It remembers the meeting of the winged messenger with the women who came to the empty tomb. It became a public holiday in the national calendar only after World War II, to prolong the spring break. Since then the use of out-of-town and open-air excursions has spread.

This year thanks to the high Easter, spring holidays are very close. Easter celebration can thus become a long vacation if they are linked to April 25th long weekend and May 1st. Those who stay or visit Italy are spoiled for choice among the many traditions and costumes that can be admired in every city and village.

But what makes Easter so distinctive in every city of Italy?

In **Bormio**, we find the tradition of the *Pasquali*: the parade of allegorical floats adorned with flowers and moss brought by young people in traditional costume.



In the center-north, we find instead Easter celebrations whose protagonist is the egg: the *Sagra* and the *Palio dell'uovo* in **Tredozio** with games, battles and parades of allegorical floats.



The dove is the protagonist of the famous celebration of the *Scoppio del Carro* in Florence, which dates back to the time of the first crusade. On Easter Sunday a mechanical dove hits a cart in front of the Duomo of Florence, thus lighting the fireworks contained in the cart.

Sicily is rich in ancient local rituals and customs where **masked characters** parade through the streets of the cities. Among the most suggestive we find the **Real maestranza** in Caltanissetta which dates back to the Spanish domination, the procession of the **Mysteries** in Trapani and the celebrations in Prizzi and Adrano, an eighteenth-century tradition handed down from father to son.

Finally, not to be missed in **Rome**, the evocative *Via Crucis* of the Pope that reaches the **Colosseum**.



The Order of the Sons and Daughters of Italy in America (OSIDA) promotes, enhances, and encourages the *study of Italian heritage and culture*. Our local chapter offers two scholarships to high school seniors of Italian descent who display academic excellence and leadership abilities. Applications are available for students from public and private high schools in Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, and Nassau counties. This year the program was completed by end of March, 2025. For information about Scholarship Applications for next year Go to web page - www.osdia.org/scholarships/

The scholarship committee selected 2 winners:

- ◆ JACK LIUZZO Bishop Kenny High School
- ◆ KATE VITORI Fernandina Beach High School

They will be honored at the April 25, OSDIA Dinner. Kudos to my committee for a job well done!

Grazie, Lucy Cortese

Scholarship Chair Email - lgcortese@att.net phone number 904-208-0032

For more information or a scholarship application, contact chair Lucy Cortese at lgcortese@att.net.

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🌟 Our New Website is Live! Visit www.italiainjax.org 🌟

We're excited to announce the official launch of Amici d'Italia's brand-new website: www.italiainjax.org!

This site is designed to be a central hub for all things Amici — a place to stay updated on events, browse photos, learn about our history, and stay connected with fellow members.

Here's how you can get involved:

💬 Send Us Your Feedback & Suggestions

We'd love to hear your thoughts! If you have ideas for features, pages, or content you'd like to see, please let us know. This is *your* club website — help us make it great.

🖼️ Add Your Profile Picture & Bio

Members can now create an account and, if they choose, add a profile photo and short bio. This will appear in our **private Member Directory**, viewable **only to logged-in members** to ensure everyone's privacy.

To submit your info, just visit the **Contact page** on the website and upload your photo and a few details about yourself.

Don't worry about formatting or writing style — just send the basics, and we'll take care of the rest!

👉 Spread the Word

Share the link with friends and family who might be interested in our community. Whether they're curious about Italian culture, local events, or just good food and company, everyone is welcome.

Visit us today at www.italiainjax.org and help us bring Amici d'Italia to life online!

Grazie mille!

Giancarlo Zepeda
Communications, Amici d'Italia | Lodge #2791



What my Italian Heritage means to me

By Kate Vitori, Fernandina Beach High School

I chose this topic because my Italian heritage has always been a prominent part of my life. Even though the nice tan and cool name are fun, there is so much depth to what being Italian truly means. My Italian heritage is more than where I come from, it has shaped how I view life today.

I have been blessed with an incredibly loving family, which I believe stems from my heritage. When my family first moved to America, it was certainly a challenge. They were brave enough to come over, but were faced with the harsh realities of that age. They did not get equal opportunities. Though times were tough, I believe this caused families and communities of Italians to come together. They were able to experience joy with each other, and did not allow circumstances to ruin their relationships. My family has always taught me the importance of relationships, that relationships are what truly bring joy in life. Through hard times and good, it is those who you surround yourself with that will keep you up and not let you fall.

My Italian heritage taught me the value of quality time. When I was younger, my family always made it a priority to have "Family Day" once a week. Though that slowly faded as I grew up, we still do our best to be with each other when we can. It is easy to get distracted by the business of life, but that business should never take priority over family. Even today, whenever the opportunity arises, my grandmother and I will cook dinner together. It is so important to put the distractions away and appreciate those around you. To not just be around each other, but to put away distractions and truly live together. To get through the hardships they once endured, I believe my Italian family took this time seriously. I believe my Italian heritage passed this priority down to my family today.

My Italian heritage has taught me the value of diligence. If things are difficult, it is important to push through and to never give up. I have been through some rough patches in life, but my family has always tried their best to support me. However, sometimes they failed to do so, and that is when it is important for me to keep going and to not get discouraged. I believe this determination was passed down from my ancestors, as they did not stop when life was hard.

They stayed and made it through. This has applied to every area of my life, my school, my job, my faith, and so much more. I have always held it in my heart to keep going despite challenges that may arise.

My Italian heritage means everything to me, as it has shaped my life, values, and morals into what they are today.



How has Hollywood influenced the stereotyping of Italian Americans?

By Jack Liuzzo, Bishop Kenny High School

While an Italian usually implies a loyal, family-oriented, stylish, and passionate person, Hollywood has often created its own exaggerated mold of Italians that, although untrue, spreads much more easily. As an Italian, it's challenging to counteract these portrayals without unintentionally reaffirming the stereotype. One of the most persistent stereotypes to which Hollywood seems to default is the association of Italians with Mafia connections. Films like *The Godfather* and *Goodfellas* glorify certain aspects of the Mafia, accentuating sheer power, drama, and a misleading silence before a conclusive revenge while ignoring the reality that much of Italian-American life consists of genuine friendliness. The loyalty so common to Italian households is often misrepresented as a loyalty of convenience.

While this should seem unrealistic, many people are unable, or unwilling, to experience the Italian culture for themselves, but entirely able to visit their couches for Hollywood's Italy. Little interaction with the true Italy and an expansion of technology leads to a person's view of Italy on a screen subconsciously engulfing the view of the true Italy in person. Because of this, simply seeing an Italian causes the thought to form for many people that the Italian could have Mafia ties. Yes, it is unlikely but they could. Especially as one sharing Sicilian descent with the Mafia. I believe that the presence of this inkling alone leads to an embellishment of the stereotypes, and helps form a bias obscuring true trust and connection in favor of a fantastical view that is difficult to dispel. No matter how much the life revolves around integrity and sincerity, movies such as *The Godfather* and *Goodfellas* provide timeless examples of Italians deliberately seeming pure only to resort to underhanded means. The shadow of Hollywood's stereotypes also causes spectators to emphasize any Italian action that is seemingly in accordance with the movies, forbidding a fair chance to display oneself, especially when it comes to first impressions.

Despite this, I do not perceive. Hollywood's depiction of Italians as entirely negative. Many films beautifully highlight the important aspects of Italian culture that I see with almost every interaction, such as a nearly unlimited emphasis on family, a devout faith, fine cuisine, and being a romantic. However, even these desirable attributes create false dispositions that may or may not reflect the individual, leading to the same hindrance of the true connection so important to most Italians. In America, true equality is not achieved by being forced to overcome unconscious biases; it is achieved by not having to navigate the constraints of these stereotypes at all. Luckily for us, however, being an Italian has always meant embracing resilience, creativity, and perseverance in the face of adversity. Ultimately, despite Hollywood's caricatures, my heritage continues to empower me to build meaningful relationships, challenge misconceptions, and live a fulfilling life defined by my own truths rather than someone else's script.



Orvieto, Italy



Capri, Italy

April/May
2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Council Meeting 6:30pm	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Palm Sunday	14	15	16	17 Holy Thursday	18 Good Friday	19 Holy Saturday
20 Easter Sunday	21	22	23	24	25 General Meeting 6:30pm	26
27	28	29	30	1 May	2	3
4	5	6 Council Meeting 6:30pm	7	8	9	10

Happy Easter.....

Buona Pasqua

....may Love, peace, and Happiness be your constant companion all the days of your life....

....for all my friends and family,

