



# Amici d'Italia

## Lodge 2791

## Jacksonville, Florida

Volume 3 - Issue 28

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## The Amici Newsletter

### July 2026

### FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Cari amici ~

How blessed are we as Americans to be alive to celebrate the **250th** anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence and the birth of our great nation. America, more specifically the USA, is sometimes called "the American Experiment" because of the unique nature of American representation, the three separate but equal branches of government, and the focus on and protection of the inalienable rights of American citizens.

We know that well before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Italians contributed significantly to the discovery, naming, and founding of what became the United States. Of course, many of us were taught about Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, and Giovanni da Verrazzano. But what of Enrico Tonti, Eusebio Kino, and even John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto), who established viable transatlantic routes and who aided in mapping and settling parts of North America?

Leading up to the signing of the Declaration, Italians and people of Italian descent played roles in the *American Revolution* and the early republic (ironically before Italy became a unified nation). Perhaps one of the most profound contributors was Philip Mazzei, a Tuscan physician, merchant, an *Enlightenment* thinker, and a close friend and neighbor of Thomas Jefferson in Virginia.

President John F. Kennedy, in his 1958 book ***A Nation of Immigrants***, asserted that Philip Mazzei influenced the drafting of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, writing: *The great doctrine 'All men are created equal' incorporated into the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson, was paraphrased from the writing of Philip Mazzei, an Italian-born patriot and pamphleteer, who was a close friend of Jefferson... This phrase appears in Italian in Mazzei's own hand, written in Italian, several years prior to the writing of the Declaration of Independence. Mazzei and Jefferson often exchanged ideas about true liberty and freedom. Mazzei transcended the ideas of freedom as he also served in the Virginia militia and influenced revolutionary thought alongside figures like Thomas Paine.*

Continued on page 2...



Further, it is no accident that Jefferson called his Virginia home, Monticello. Jefferson designed the main house using neoclassical design principles pioneered by Italian Renaissance architect, Andrea Palladio, whose palatial designs can be seen in the US Capitol and Harvard University, among other places. Italian political and philosophical traditions, from ancient Rome to Enlightenment thinkers like Cesare Beccaria (*On Crimes and Punishments*) and Gaetano Filangieri (*The Science of Legislation*), influenced the Founding Fathers' ideas on republicanism, law, and liberty.

After the Revolution and well into the 1800's, smaller numbers of Italians settled in the U.S. (e.g., artists, musicians, and professionals). Among them was Constantino Brumidi, who painted the *Brumidi Corridors* (vaulted, ornately decorated corridors on the first floor of the Senate wing), the fresco *Apotheosis of Washington*, and half of the *Frieze of American History*, all in the U.S. Capitol (he died in 1880 after falling from scaffolding while working on the "William Penn and the Indians" panel). Filippo Costaggini was commissioned to complete the remaining scenes using Brumidi's sketches, finishing the *Frieze* in 1889.

Of course, many of our ancestors came with the major waves of Italian immigration from the late 1800s through the early 20th century, bringing with them a variety and diversity of talents and skills, including a nonpareil industriousness. Combined with their hunger for freedom and the opportunity to thrive in that freedom, Italian immigrants and their descendants helped build America literally and figuratively while existing at various levels of society. They provided essential labor for railroads, mines, factories, dams, tunnels, and much of the major urban infrastructure (e.g., New York and other industrial centers).

In science and innovation: Antonio Meucci developed an early precursor to the telephone; Enrico Fermi (Nobel laureate) led key work on the first controlled nuclear chain reaction and the Manhattan Project. Broader impacts include military service (e.g., thousands in the Civil War and later conflicts), business, politics (e.g., Fiorello La Guardia), arts, sports, and philanthropy (e.g., Mother Cabrini, who founded schools, hospitals, and orphanages for immigrants).

And like many of you, members of my family served proudly in the US Military and in service of the country they loved. At 16 my paternal grandfather, Dominic, enlisted in the US Army, serving in the last active horse cavalry in WWI, where he fought in three major battles. And two uncles, including my Godfather, served during both the Korean War and Vietnam War.

Throughout, Italian Americans have enriched U.S. culture through food, family values, labor activism, and countless contributions across fields, while overcoming early discrimination and economic challenges.

Looking forward, in the next 250 years, the OSDIA will work to preserve our rich Italian heritage for our children, grandchildren as well as future generations, who will hopefully celebrate such future milestones, remembering the inextricable link between their Italian heritage and their American heritage and the contributions of their ancestors in sustaining it. God bless America and the American experiment.

Grazie e ciao,  
Dom.



**Family heritage  
World War 1 service**

*Honoring the earliest  
generations who sacrifice  
began our Italian-  
American legacy of  
service*



**Family heritage  
Korean & Vietnam  
War service**

*Honoring the genera-  
tions who carried our  
Italian-American legacy  
through courage and  
sacrifice*



## 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.



*Please keep Joanne Patchett in your thought and prayers during this difficult time, as we remember her life and her passing.*

*Mass scheduled for Deceased Members is  
Saturday September 12, 2026 4pm at Christ the  
King Catholic Church 742 Arlington Road*

"O Lord, you give me light; you  
dispel my darkness."  
Psalm 138:1

## July Birthdays

Dom Addeo  
Lawrence Fiorello  
Frank Guarino

Christopher Miller  
David Meltzer  
Janice Meltzer

Regina McDonough  
Karen Spencer

## Social Fun Times!

### *OSDIA Members Enjoy Spring & Summer Gatherings*

Our OSDIA members enjoyed two wonderful social gatherings this season. On May 30, we met at Happy Brew on Hendricks Avenue for a relaxed morning of coffee and conversation. On June 13, members traveled to St. Augustine for a scenic one hour cruise, followed by a delicious lunch at OC Whites Restaurant. These events brought friends together for great food, great company, and great memories.



*Members enjoying coffee and conversation at  
Happy Brew on Hendricks Ave — May 30.*



*Members relaxing on the St. Augustine cruise and  
gathering for lunch at OC Whites — June 13*



# The Amici Newsletter Lodge 2791 July 2026

## Information, Activities and Updates

### Meetings Mailing Address Contact Information



- Council meets 1st Tuesday of the month. **July 7, 6:30pm.**
- Lodge meets the 3rd Friday of the month at 6:30pm at Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran Church 7860 Southside Blvd, Jax FL. **There will be an Ice Cream Social July 17, at 6:30pm.**
- Mail address: Amici D'Italia Lodge 2791 PO Box 8985 Jacksonville, FL 32239-8985
- President: Dom Addeo email domaddeo@gmail.com phone 732-331-7196
- 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](http://www.italiainjax.org) Giancarlo Zepeda email support@pendabrytemetal.com



The book club meets periodically at 6:30pm. Meeting at Toni O'Connor's home 12234 Spiney Ridge Drive South Jacksonville, FL 32225. **No Meeting in July.**

Book Discussion:

Chair Leader Cheryl Callavini 904-744-1779

**RSVP to attend** as this is a gated community call or text Toni at 732-272-3910

### 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](mailto:Anniesheen@comcast.net)

Italian Heritage Cook Book - \$15 - 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. For more information about next year's scholarship program visit [www.osdia.org/scholarships](http://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.** Established committees are: Fraternity, Finance, Philanthropy (Charities & Scholarship). Contact Sal Santapola @ [saldesanta@gmail.com](mailto:saldesanta@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering.

### Stonewood Grill & Tavern Thursday, June 25



Our members gathered at Stonewood Grill & Tavern for good food, good company, and a wonderful evening.



### Restaurant Social Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen Thursday, July 23, 6pm



Join us for some good food and fellowship at Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen, located at 4954 Town Center Parkway, Jax. FL 32246. 904-561-2101.

Web page — [Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen | Home](#)



Save the Date

Salvar  
La  
data

- 7/7 Council Meeting 6:30pm
- 7/17 Ice Cream Social 6:30pm
- 7/22 Met Opera at Tinseltown times for performances 1pm and 6pm.
- 7/23 Restaurant Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen 6pm
- 8/4 Council Meeting 6:30pm
- 8/5 Met Opera at Tinseltown times for performances 1pm and 6pm



# Sons and Daughters of Italy General Meeting

*Celebrating American's 250th  
Anniversary - June 19, 2026*



This month's meeting includes updates on lodge activities, upcoming events, and recognition of American's 250 Anniversary. The table is decorated in a patriotic theme to highlight the special milestone. Members enjoyed the thoughtful set-up, which added a warm and festive touch to the evening



**Paul Renner**

*Although not on the program, former Florida Speaker Paul Renner joined us briefly to speak about his background and service.*



**Dr. Ernie Panza**

*Dr. Ernie Panza sharing insights on wellness and positive living.*



*Food served at the general meeting.*



*Members enjoying fellowship at the June meeting.*

**Dr. Ernie Panza's Mission Statement:**

*"I want every person I come into contact with to feel better about themselves because we have met. I want the way I live my life to be my message. I believe in kindness, encouragement, and lifting others up through simple, positive daily actions. My goal is to help people live healthier, happier lives by sharing what I've learned and by being a source of support and inspiration."*



## Discover Herculaneum: The Forgotten Sister of Pompeii

*Uncover the treasures of an ancient city overlooked by most travelers.*



Herculaneum (**Her-cu-la-neum**) was a 2000-year-old, ancient Roman city about five miles to the southeast of Naples, in Campania, Italy. With about 4,000–5,000 inhabitants, this splendid town lay in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius. Although it was a small seaside fishing town, Herculaneum was a wealthy town that possessed a considerable number of lavishly done up houses with colored marble cladding, buildings with frescoed roofs and mosaics, classic Roman furniture, wine racks, household shrines and much more. Since the town takes its name from Hercules, from the Greek god Herakles, it is believed the town was an Ancient Greek town as far back as the sixth century BC.

In A.D. 79, this prosperous city along with Pompeii and other Roman towns were destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius. It was engulfed and buried by superheated pyroclastic flows of molten rock that encased it into a solid mass of pumice and ash. A horrific disaster although, it converted the living, breathing city of Herculaneum into a thoroughly protected time capsule. As archaeologists dug into the ruins in the recent years of mid-18th century, they discovered well preserved wooden and other rare organic artefacts such as roofs, racks, beds, baby cots, doors, food and even some three hundred skeletons along the seashore. Since then, it has been a fascinating destination for many travelers.



Several houses, varying from grand townhouses to more humble lodgings, have been revealed in varying condition and it is possible to see many intact rooms and walls, frescoes, and decorative mosaic floors and to walk along the original cobbled streets that passed between the properties. Another highlight is the well-preserved Roman Baths complex with the original mosaic floored marble baths surrounded by various carvings and murals.

Though smaller in size than Pompeii, Herculaneum was impressive and affluent, which once can identify due to the various excavation projects over the centuries. Few sites in the world are preserved as well as Herculaneum, which led to it being designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**What to See in Herculaneum?** While there is plenty to explore and observe at Herculaneum, here are some of the top sites you should visit.



**House of Neptune** located a little further from the House of the Charred Furniture, was created as a tribute to the gods Neptune and Amphitrite. One can notice a courtyard and alcove here, along with the remains of a fountain. The primary attraction here is the stunning glass mosaic wall with marble masks over it. The mosaic was designed with vivid colors.

**Villa of the Papyri** considered one of the most magnificent villas in Herculaneum, this site gained fame due to the discovery of numerous papyrus scrolls -- mysterious sheets of illegible text. Its stunning architecture is still identifiable with the multiple frescoes, marble sculptures and bronzes that were discovered. It is thought to once have a vineyard and gardens, and a direct view of the sea from its terraces and intricate patterns featuring the gods.



**The Thermal Baths** date back to the 1st Century BC. They clearly divide separate areas for men and women. One can still identify how the water was heated by a large, still-intact furnace. Notice the changing rooms, the different hot and cold bathing areas, and even the storage areas for clothing.



Other top sites that you should visit are **Hall of the Augustales, Samnite House and the House of the Deer.**

Herculaneum is open from 8:30 AM to 5 PM between November 1st to March 14 (final admission at 3:30 PM). Its closed -on January 1st, May 1st and December 25th. **Duration:** A tour of all the main attractions at Herculaneum should take about 3 hours. The best time to visit Herculaneum is during the off-season, between October to April. Herculaneum is located at Corso Resina, 187, 80056 Ercolano NA, Italy.

For more information go to: [Herculaneum Historical Facts and Pictures | The History Hub](#)



## Annual D-Day Remembrance

**Honoring World War II Veterans**

**June 6, 2026 at Salem Centre Auditorium**

**Jacksonville, Florida**

### Personal Remarks

*(Excerpt)*

**by Past President Annette Guarino**

During the Ceremony we honored the courage and sacrifice of the men who landed on the beaches of Normandy eighty years ago. Their bravery changed the course of history and reminds us of the price paid for freedom.

Among those heroes was **Frank Purpura**, a proud Italian American and World War II veteran whose service and character continue to inspire our community. Like so many of his generation, Frank returned home with humility, building a life centered on family, service, and quiet patriotism.

We extend our gratitude to the **We Can Be Heroes Foundation**, the **Young Marines**, and all who work tirelessly to preserve the memory of our veterans. Their dedication ensures that these stories of courage are never forgotten.

**May God bless our veterans, their families, and our nation.**



**Annette Guarino with Frank Purpura**  
A treasure moment with Annette and Frank together, reflecting their shared dedication to honoring World War II veterans and preserving their stories.



**Annette Guarino with Nativity Teague**  
Recognizing her honorable military service and the vital contributions of America's women veterans.

### Tribute – Frank Purpura

At the Ceremony we honored **Frank Purpura**, a proud Italian American, World War II veteran, and dedicated member of our OSDIA Lodge. During the D-Day operations, Frank's bravery saved many lives, and he was awarded a medal for his heroic actions under fire. His courage, humility, and devotion to service left a lasting mark on all who knew him. In recognition of his character and commitment to our community, the Lodge named its annual scholarship award in his honor — a tribute that ensures his legacy continues to inspire future generations.

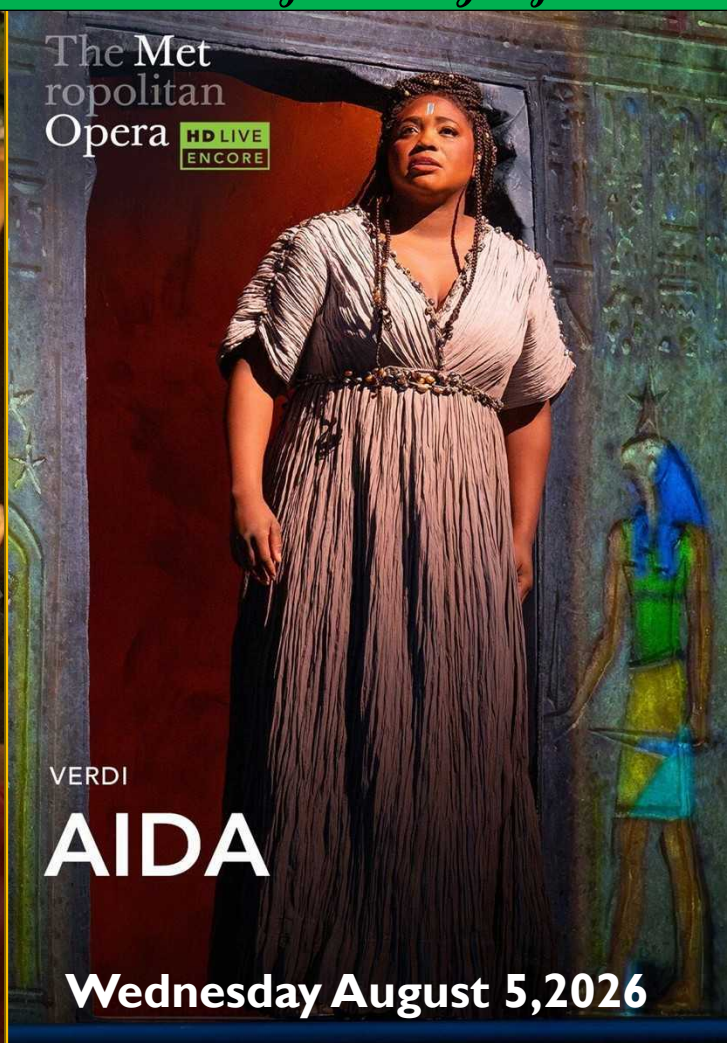
Frank lived a life defined by humility, family, and service. He returned home from the war and built a strong, loving family while remaining committed to preserving Italian American heritage and supporting his fellow members. His quiet strength and unwavering patriotism remind us of the sacrifices made by so many who fought for our freedom.

We thank the **We Can Be Heroes Foundation**, the **Young Marines**, and all who work to preserve the stories of our veterans. Their efforts ensure that heroes like Frank are never forgotten.

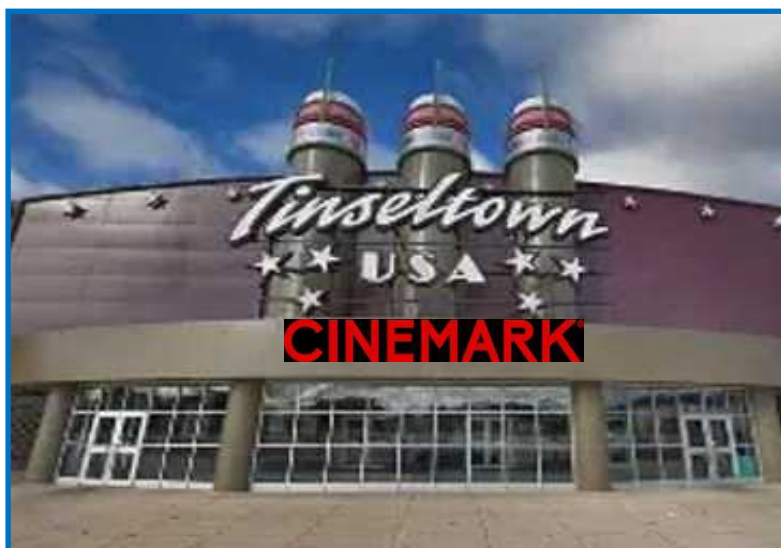


**Young Marines Presenting the Colors**  
The Young Marines open the ceremony with a proud and disciplined presentation of the National Colors in tribute to the heroes of D-Day.





**SAVE THE DATES!** Join us at **Cinemark Tinseltown** for the **Metropolitan Opera: The Merry Widow** on **Wednesday, July 22**, and **Aida** on **Wednesday, August 5**, followed by enjoying food at **Jason's Deli** located near the theatre at **4375 Southside Blvd**. Many of you enjoyed last year's operas, and this year brings **two different productions**. Show times for both Operas are: 1pm and 6pm. If you are interested, contact **Annette Guarino** at 914-548-7821 or [annette57@aol.com](mailto:annette57@aol.com).





## *The Amici Newsletter Lodge 2791 July 2026*

### **Tuscan & Umbrian Countryside**

with Optional 2-Night Rome Pre Tour Extension

with Optional 2-Night Famous Food and Ferrari: Emilia Region Post Tour Extension

**April 3 – 13, 2027**



Book with  
Airfare Now  
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Per Person

Upgrade to Elite Airfare! See inside for details.



**collette**

For more information contact  
Suzanne Fisher  
Cruise Center World Travel  
(904) 260-3401 Ext 251  
suzanne@cruisecenterjax.com

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CLICK ON THE LINK**

<https://tinyurl.com/bdh9s4b5>





July/August  
2026

| Sun | Mon | Tue                      | Wed                                  | Thu                         | Fri                        | Sat                |
|-----|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
|     |     |                          | 1                                    | 2                           | 3                          | 4 Independence Day |
| 5   | 6   | 7 Council Meeting 6:30pm | 8                                    | 9                           | 10                         | 11                 |
| 12  | 13  | 14                       | 15                                   | 16                          | 17 Ice Cream Social 6:30pm | 18                 |
| 19  | 20  | 21                       | 22 Met Opera Merry Widow 1pm and 6pm | 23 Cheddar's Restaurant 6pm | 24                         | 25                 |
| 26  | 27  | 28                       | 29                                   | 30                          | 31                         | 1                  |
| 2   | 3   | 4 Council Meeting 6:30pm | 5 Met Opera Aida 1pm and 6pm         | 6                           | 7                          | 8                  |

## SPOTLIGHT ON MEMBERS

Each month OSDIA will feature **two members**: one sharing their professional life and accomplishments and one sharing their personal or family story and interests. Help us get to know each other—volunteer or nominate a member for the August issue.



### Name

- **Spotlight type:** Professional / Personal
- **Work profession:** title & employer
- **Family background:** one line (origins, heritage, or notable story)
- **Short bio:** 50–75 words (career highlights or personal story)

- **Photo:** optional
- **Contact email**
- **Preferred month:** optional

**Deadline for August - July 24** — please send submissions early to allow editing and layout. **Send submissions to:** Giancarlo Zepeda —support@pendabrytemetal.com