



The Roar of the Lion

January 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I hope you are gearing up for an exciting 2025. Along with our traditional events, we have a newly-formed funding raising committee that is looking into some fun activities that will also make money. Sr. Becky DiFilippo and Sr. Melissa Distaffen have offered to be co-chairs and are eager to hear of any ideas that we can do. Short of bungy jumping or tightrope walking across Niagara Falls, we are willing to try something different. Put your ideas into a proposal and present them to Becky and Melissa.

OSDIA has three important elections this year. Our Lodge will decide on a new council for 2025-2027. Our NYS Grand Lodge will be electing a new president and executive board at their convention in June and we will also be electing a new Supreme Lodge president at the biennial in August. While each president brings something different to the position, the end goal is the same: to promote our heritage and culture and educate as to who we are and why we are proud of that.

I want to thank all of you who have paid your 2025 dues. Our membership determines the per capita fee we are charged from the NYS Grand Lodge. They also pay a per capita fee to the Supreme Lodge, so by paying your dues you belong to the Supreme Lodge and are entitled to their benefits. I also want to thank Sr. Marisa Przepiora for sending out invoices both via email and snail mail. Without her staying on top of this, we would not be able to accurately reconcile our membership list with the Grand Lodge. If you have not paid your dues yet, please do so as soon as possible. You are important to our Lodge.

Although we send scholarship information to all the high schools in Monroe County, we often hear from students that they did not know about them. If you know of a graduating senior (must be of Italian descent), please have them contact me or Sr. Marisa for the information.

Our Winter Picnic and Clambake RSVP deadline is February 1st. We will need to order clams no later than Feb. 5th, and the numbers for this order cannot be changed. It is a great way to spend an afternoon in the middle of winter. We have fun, enjoy great food, and spend time with friends and family. So don't keep this secret and invite others to come with you. We will also have "baskets" to raffle.

I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Take care. God Bless
Fraternally yours,
Marjorie



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EDITOR
Annette DeCarolis

2025 Vincent Lombardi Lodge Calendar

January 2 nd	6:30 Council Meeting
January 9 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
February 6 th	6:30 Council Meeting
February 13 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
March 6 th	6:30 Council Meeting
March 13 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
April 3 rd	6:30 Council Meeting
April 10 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
May 1 st	6:30 Council Meeting
May 8 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
June 5 th	6:30 Council Meeting
June 12 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
July 3 rd	6:30 Council Meeting
July 10 th	7:00 Scholarship Awards Night
August 7 th	6:30 Council Meeting
August 14 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
September 4 th	6:30 Council Meeting
September 11 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
October 2 nd	6:30 Council Meeting
October 9 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
November 6 th	6:30 Council Meeting
November 13 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
December 4 th	6:30 Council Meeting
December 11 th	7:00 Meeting/Holiday Gathering

2025 Lodge Events

February 15th	Winter Picnic and Clambake Bushman Cabin, Henrietta Veterans' Memorial Park
March 13th	New Officer Installation
May 4th	Italian Regional Dinner Eyer Building
May 24th	Memorial Day Parade East Rochester
July 10th	Scholarships and Awards Night
August 23rd	Summer Picnic Quinzi Lodge, Eye Park
September	Annual Pie Sale
October 18th	Italian-American Heritage Dinner Webster Country Club
November	Turkey Raffle TBD St. Nicholas Hall
December 11th	Holiday Gathering Eyer Building

Our Annual Winter Picnic and Clambake — February 15th

We hope you will join us for our annual picnic and clambake this year.
As in the past, members are asked to bring an appetizers or dessert.





Join Zoom Meeting

This is the zoom link for General Assembly meetings each month thru April 2025.

Time: January 9, 2025 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85831885141?pwd=dU1QaGlmUGw2c0pOYm1IMkJ3bHgrQT09>

Meeting ID: 858 3188 5141

Passcode: 837616

IMPORTANT MEETING JANUARY 9TH

Plan to attend the January General Assembly Meeting. We will discuss the 2025 budget for approval, consider events for the upcoming year. There will be a report from the nomination committee on the slate of officers to be brought forward for election.

This meeting will be accessible through zoom.

From the Financial Secretary

Did you know you can pay for dues and events and even make donations to the Vincent Lombardi Lodge by credit card or PayPal?

When utilizing PayPal, include a note indicating what the payment is for. Please include a **\$2 service charge**.

There are four ways to do this:

1. See Financial Secretary Marisa Przepiora at a meeting or event to utilize our credit card reader.
2. Log into your PayPal account, click the link to send money and send to:
vincentlombardilodge@gmail.com.
3. Ask a Council member to have an invoice with a link for payment sent to your email address.
4. Scan the QR code here.





In the darkness of winter you can be sunshine to others.

**Do something today to make a difference:
send a note, make a phone call, be present to someone.**



In our thoughts and prayers...

Sandy Meleca

Dawn DiGennaro's wife

Sam Mammano

Elizabeth Osta's brother

Patty and Gordie Rask

Jim and Peg Vacanti

Joe Rondinelli, NYS Grand Lodge Past President

Family of John and Elena Fratta

(John is NYS Chair CSJ)

National President Michael Polo and family

*And all of our members who have suffered recently
with illness or loss of a loved one.*

January Birthdays



1/1 Mary Kosinsk

1/2 Sam Mammano

1/6 Paul DeCarolis

1/9 Virginia McIntyre

1/11 Ron Santoli

1/13 Lorrie DiBisceglie

1/16 Pat Bartholomew

1/20 Tony Palucci Jr

MILESTONES

A milestone is a significant event in your life: graduating, getting married, a special anniversary, retiring, having a baby or a grandbaby, getting a new job, or whatever you want to celebrate. Please share it with your Brothers and Sisters. We want to help you celebrate your milestone(s). Send the information and pictures to Sr. Marjorie. mafocarazzo@gmail.com

We are grateful that our famiglia is affiliated with groups that offer help and hope.

Joining the Vincent Lombardi Lodge (OSDIA) means joining a *famiglia* committed to preserving our traditions and becoming an integral part of a movement driving positive change. Many of our members support other clubs and non-profit organizations in our community that may be of interest to our members.

If you'd like to share information on a cause near and dear to your heart

or promote an event in a future newsletter, please contact the editor:

annette@decarolisgroup.com.



In the Vincent Lombardi Lodge every two years we elect an entirely new council, even if most of the council remains the same. A position can be held for two consecutive terms.

We form a Nominating Committee in early October to contact either the incumbent or potential candidates to fill vacancies. This year, most of the council will have termed out so we need to fill the following positions: president, vice-president, recording and corresponding secretaries, treasurer, financial secretary, trustees, master/mistress of ceremony, sentinel, orator, and arbitrator positions.

Vince and Joe Rube co-chaired the committee. **The slate will be presented at the January 9th General Assembly Meeting** and nominations will be open from the floor. If anyone runs from the floor for any position, an election will be held at the February 13th General Assembly meeting.

**Installation of the newly-elected officers will be held
7 pm Thursday, March 13th
at the Eyer Building,
followed by
a soup and bread dinner.**

La Befana

Christians around the world celebrate January 6th as Epiphany, but Italian children, on this day, rush to the fireplace to see what La Befana has left in their stockings: sweets, chocolates and maybe money if they've been good or 'charcoal' (black sugar lumps) if naughty.

To the ancient Romans January 6th was the culmination of a 12-day festive period following December 25th. They celebrated the birth of God Mithras which happened in a cave - a story very similar to that of Jesus Christ's birth. It was also a day to end the dark winter days and celebrate the beginning of a new year of prosperity and the welcoming of Spring.

The story most of us are familiar with is La Befana



is an old, poor woman who lives in a shack. As the wise men or Three Magi journey to find the baby Jesus, they stop for food and shelter. Grateful for the help, the Magi invite the old woman to join

them on their search, but Befana refused explaining she had chores to do. As she slept that night, she awoke to an unusually bright light in the sky. She took it as a sign to follow the Wise Men but lost her way. She neither found the Magi nor the manger with the Baby Jesus. And so, the story continues that on the eve of January 6th La Befana takes to the skies in search of the Messiah. She travels from house to house and leaves treats for the sleeping children hoping Jesus is among them.

*Whichever you believe,
Italians adore her
and the Christmas spirit
continues a little longer.*

Scholarships and Grants

The Sons and Daughters of Italy in America offers scholarships at all levels of the organization - state, national and, of course, our local Vincent Lombardi Lodge.

New York Grand Lodge Foundation, Inc.



The Grand Lodge of New York has provided financial support to students for decades through the generosity of our members, lodges, benefactors, and friends. One of our core values is to promote, encourage, and support this program that honors young adults in their academic pursuits: an accredited institution of higher education, a trade school or students who have an IEP or 504 plan,

For more information: nysosia.org/scholarships/ or mafocarazzo@gmail.com

Eligibility

- Applicants must be of Italian descent and a resident of New York State.
- Undergraduate awards are for current high school senior who will begin college in Fall 2025.
- Graduate awards are for college graduate who will begin graduate study in Fall 2025.
- Selection is based on academic excellence and service, and an average of 85% or above.

Requirements

The following MUST be submitted directly to the District Scholarship Chairperson for the applicant's lodge:

- Official transcripts including first semester senior year grades,
- SAT/ACT scores (if taken), Class rank and size of graduating class , if possible.
- Two letters of recommendation from teachers or counselors.
- A student essay (no more than 350 words) summarizing educational and career goals, school and community service and a discussion of the significance of your Italian heritage.

Fees and Deadlines

- A non-refundable processing fee is \$10, payable to the NY Grand Lodge Foundation.
- All applications are due by **March 31, 2025** and must be submitted to Marjorie Focarazzo.
1248 Calkins Rd., Rochester NY 14623

National OSDIA Leadership Grant Competition

The Sons of Italy Foundation sponsor their 2025 merit-based scholarships ranging from \$5000 to \$25,000. The description and specific requirements including the invitation to apply for each scholarship can be found on the Supreme Lodge's website: osdia.org/initiatives/scholarships/

General Eligibility and Requirements

- ◆ US citizens of Italian descent who will be enrolled in an undergraduate program or graduate program at an accredited school of higher education for the fall 2025 term.
- ◆ \$35 non-refundable processing fee, which will include a one year at-large membership to OSDIA with all at-large membership benefits.
- ◆ Upon receipt of \$35 processing fee, the applicant will receive an email with a link to complete the application. All applications and materials, including letters of recommendation and transcripts through the December term, must be submitted online at the link provided, by **March 14, 2025**.

Local Vincent Lombardi Lodge Scholarships

Applications will be sent to all Monroe County schools in January 2025. and are also available on our lodge website: www.sonsofitalyrochester.com.

ELIGIBILITY

- High school senior graduating from a Monroe County public, private, parochial or certified home school, or related to a lodge member if living in another county.
- Student must be of Italian descent (at least one grandparent must be of Italian heritage).
- Student must commence study at an accredited educational institution to continue learning in the fall following their high school graduation, including community/junior colleges, colleges, universities, and career, technical or vocational/trade schools.
- Preference is given to students associated with members of the lodge, but anyone who meets the above requirements is eligible and encouraged to apply.

REQUIREMENTS

- Official Application Form: Complete and submit the application form or a photocopy of the application.
- Official Transcripts: A copy of the applicant's transcripts must be sent to the chair of the scholarship committee by the applicant's high school counselor.
- Resume: Submit a current resume outlining extracurricular activities such as volunteer service, work experience, community service, sports honor received, etc.
- Letters of Recommendation: Submit two letters of recommendation. One letter should be from someone associated with your school i.e. counselor, teacher, coach, etc.; and the other must be from someone outside of school i.e. employer, mentor, clergy, etc. Letters of recommendation from family members are not acceptable.
- Essay: Submit an essay following the guidelines found on page 3 of this application form.
- A photo of the applicant would be helpful.

If so requested, the applicant must be available to participate in an interview before the scholarship committee. The time and place of the interview will be announced once applications are reviewed.

The winners will be presented their scholarships at the Awards Night in August with a check made payable to the educational institution they will attend. The recipients will be asked to address the group and their parents and guests are also encouraged to attend.

FEES AND DEADLINES

- There is no fee to apply.
- All requested information must be submitted to the Vincent Lombardi Lodge #2270 Scholarship Committee Chairperson by **March 31, 2025**. Applications or materials received after the deadline date will not be considered for the scholarship.

Please submit your application to Marisa Przepiora

2453 Wheeler Station Rd., Bloomfield NY 14469

or email: vincentlombardilodge@gmail.com

For questions please contact Marisa Przepiora at 585-750-8336

Italian Classes at the Casa

Courses will start the week of Monday, January 27th and will end on Friday, April 25th.

Classes are held once a week for two hours (6 - 8 PM).



The goal of these three levels is to enable students to acquire some mastery of the following five language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and intercultural competence. They all will emphasize practice of grammar and communication skills in the classroom.

Level I - Fridays, 6 - 8PM

S. Lambert (slamber1@naz.edu)

This course is designed for true beginners, those with no previous knowledge of Italian.

Level II - Mondays, 6 - 8PM

M. Stio (melissa.stio@greececsd.org)

This course is designed for individuals with some experience with the language.

Level III - M. Stio, Wednesdays, 6 - 8PM

M. Stio (melissa.stio@greececsd.org)

This course is designed for individuals with some experience with the language. At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- ◆ Understand and apply the grammar rules covered in the semester.
- ◆ Read and understand passages in Italian that will gradually become more challenging.
- ◆ Write short compositions in Italian in line with the acquisition of more vocabulary as the course progresses.
- ◆ Listen to native speakers and understand the gist of what is being said, starting from very basic exchanges to more complex speeches.
- ◆ Communicate in Italian at an intermediate level, formulate your presentations of different subjects presented in the course and answer elementary questions.
- ◆ Show knowledge of the cultural aspects of the Italian-speaking world.

To register visit our website or contact casa@naz.edu - (585) 389 2468.

Course pricing: Casa Members: \$290 per course

Non Members: \$345 per course

Checks can be made payable to: Frank DiMino Casa Italiana

4245 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14618



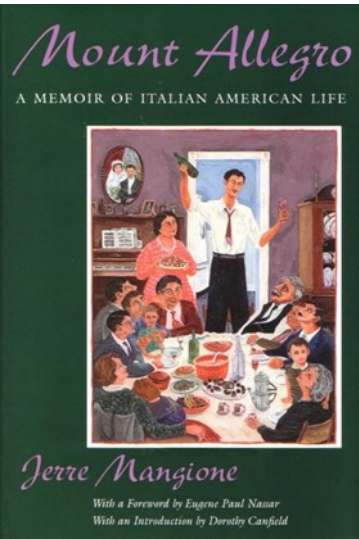
The Bookshelf

Reading books adds endless benefits to our daily lives, including stress-relief and entertainment. Reading may also improve our concentration and memory, expand our vocabulary, enhance our knowledge, and increase our imagination and creativity. Reading books or even hearing them on tape can take you anywhere, anytime—even deep within yourself.



This Month's Selection: *Mount Allegro* by Jerre Mangione

There's a feel of autobiography in this light-hearted recapturing of the spirit of the Italian-American colony in Rochester, New York, called "Mount Allegro."



Mount Allegro is an extraordinary memoir, a celebration of Sicilian life, an engaging sociological portrait, and a moving reminiscence of a fledgling writer's escape from the restrictive culture in which he grew up. Jerre Mangione's autobiographical chronicle of his youth in a Sicilian community in Rochester is one of the truly enduring books about the immigrant experience in this country. The book depicts the lives of Sicilian immigrants as their customs clash with those of their adopted country. His Sicilian family stubbornly clings to native customs, manner and language, and the lad feels at home in neither world until—wholly Americanized—he can look objectively and appreciatively on the very traits he had resented. The book in the final analysis is a thinly fictionalized study of the Italian in America. Family squabbles, soul-nourishing food, and the casting of evil eyes are only

some of the ingredients of this richly textured book, although they must all take second place to its unforgettable characters. There are colorful figures in the story and many amusing and touching incidents. As Eugene Paul Nassar writes in the book's Foreword, "*Mount Allegro* . . . gave a literary visibility and identity, amiable and appealing, to a poorly understood ethnic group in America, and did so at a very high level of artistry." It is easy reading and delightful in detail.

Gerlando (Jerre) Mangione was born to Josephine (née Polizzi) and Gaspare Mangione in Rochester, New York. His parents both emigrated from Agrigento, Italy. Jerre claims that one of the reasons for writing "Mount Allegro" was his desire to show a positive image of Sicilians in America. Two decades after the book appeared, the city of Rochester officially renamed Mangione's old neighborhood *Mount Allegro*, in tribute to his book.

Mr. Mangione became a professor in the English department of the University of Pennsylvania in 1961 and was named emeritus professor of American literature upon his retirement in 1978.



Jerre Mangione



A SIP OF WINE

Monteci Winery:

A Legacy of Mastery and Innovation in Valpolicella

Five Generations of Expertise at Monteci Winery

Nestled amidst the picturesque countryside of Valpolicella, the vineyards yield high-quality wines, blending traditional techniques with modern winemaking tools and methods. Commitment, excellence, and innovation: the Righetti family has been producing high-quality wines for five generations. At this winery, the entire production process, from the vineyard to the glass, is carefully followed, creating precious wines in line with the ancient traditions of classic Valpolicella while focusing on innovation and progress.



To enhance the drying process of Monteci wines, they have recently dedicated a section of the wine cellar to ageing, ensuring optimal quality and flavor. Since 2018, the company has converted its entire production to organic, ensuring high-quality products while fully respecting vineyard biodiversity. The unique soil composition and significant temperature fluctuations between night and day create an ideal environment for cultivating high-quality grapes and achieving exquisite flavors. Meticulous vineyard management and careful fruit selection result in low yields per vine, prioritizing quality, and aromatic excellence. These grapes are



then transformed into wine, honoring the traditional practices of the region with immense passion, guided by generations of experience.

*Thank
you*

**We appreciate the sponsorship of
UA Local #13
Plumbers, Pipefitters and Service Techs**



We All Need a Tree!



I hired a plumber to help me restore an old farmhouse, and after he had just finished a rough first day on the job—a flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric drill quit, and his ancient one-ton truck refused to start. While I drove him home, he sat in stoney silence. On arriving, he invited me in to meet his family. As we walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands.

Afterwards he walked me to the car. We passed the tree, and my curiosity got the better of me. I asked him about what I had seen him do earlier. “Oh, that’s my trouble tree,” he replied. “I know I can’t help having troubles on the job,

but one thing’s for sure, those troubles don’t belong in the house with my wife and children. So, I hang them up on the tree every night when I come home and ask God to take care of them. Then in the morning, I pick them up again.

“Funny thing is,” he smiled, “when I come out in the morning to pick ‘em up, there aren’t nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before.”

Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we are here, we might as well dance.

Felice Anno Nuovo 2025

New Year’s Resolutions



There’s nothing “new” about making New Year’s resolutions. The ancient Babylonians established the first known practice of setting new year pledges, a tradition that has endured for over 4,000 years. Every January 1, millions of people set intentions to exercise more, spend less, or be kinder—a ritual that feels deeply modern but has surprisingly ancient roots. This time of year can be refreshing and motivating as we focus on new beginnings. Here are a few realistic suggestions.

Be grateful

This may just be the easiest new year’s resolution, and also one of the ones that can really help you feel better. Recognizing the things in your life that you can be grateful for is good for your mental and physical wellness

Exercise your brain

Solving even simple math problems feels like a reward, helping to curb negative feelings. Playing mind-boosting games can help manage stress and anxiety, as well as boost happiness endorphins at the same time.

Make time for family

If you have healthy family relationships, do everything you can to maintain them. Family members can help you get through tough times and celebrate the great times.

OSDIA Vincent Lombardi Lodge
1248 Calkins Rd
Rochester NY 14623

President

Marjorie Focarazzo

Vice-President

Jeremy DiFilippo

Recording Secretary

Patricia Bartholomew

Financial Secretary

Marisa Przepiora

Treasurer

Carol DiNicola

Orator

Joe Rubé

Mistress of Ceremony

Melissa DiStaffen

Sentinel

Vacant

Trustees

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Maurice Palucci
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Immediate Past President

Sandra Meleca

Chaplain

Patricia Galante

Chaplain Emeritus

Sister Carole Proia

District VIII State Trustee

Vincent Giannantonio

State Deputy to Lombardi Lodge

Peter Gillotte

State Deputy to Geneva Lodge

Jeremy DiFilippo

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Joseph Berta*
Joseph Rubé
Jennifer Rubé*
Vincent Giannantonio
Sandra Meleca

**Vincent Lombardi Lodge communications should be sent to:
President Marjorie Focarazzo 1248 Calkins Rd Rochester NY 14623
mafocarazzo@gmail.com**