



The Roar of the Lion

February 2026

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

I hope everyone's having a great start to the new year and keeping warm.

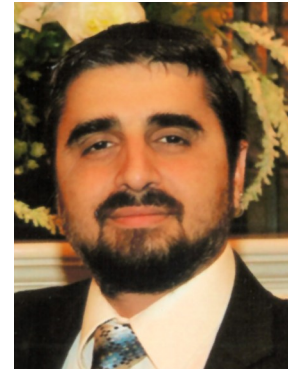
Just a friendly reminder, if you haven't paid your **member dues for 2026**, please do so as soon as possible. We are required to send in our reconciled members list to the Grand Lodge by February 28th so that our per capita tax can be accurately calculated. If you're not planning on renewing, please let us know by emailing us at vincentlombardilodge@gmail.com or calling/texting our Financial Secretary, Marisa Przepiora at 585-750-8336.

As you know, the **NYS OSDIA Convention** is coming up in June. In order to be fully represented at convention, it's required that the President and Immediate Past President attend with two delegates and an alternate in case one of the two delegates is unable to attend. If you're interested in being a delegate this year, please let us know. If we have more than two members interested, we will have a ballot vote at our March general assembly meeting.

As everyone knows, **Valentine's Day** is coming up known as *La Festa degli Innamorati* (Day of Lovers) in Italy. For those of you who don't know, Valentine's Day derived from the Roman spring festival in honor of Juno, the goddess of marriage. Unlike in the U.S., the holiday is less commercialized and completely concentrates on romance between couples in love. It's not common to send gifts or cards to anyone other than your significant other. Just like here, couples will go out to romantic dinners, exchange gifts, such as chocolates, flowers and jewelry.

State al caldo!

Jeremy DiFilippo



**In honor of Valentine's Day
we plan on having Valentine's treats
after our February Meeting
on Thursday, February 12th.
Please join us and celebrate.**

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EDITOR

Annette DeCarolis\

2026 Vincent Lombardi Lodge Calendar

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

2026 Lodge Events

February 1st	Winter Picnic and Clambake
May	Spaghetti Dinner
May 23rd	Memorial Day Parade East Rochester
July 9th	Scholarship Awards Night Eyer Building
August 9th	Summer Picnic Quinzi Lodge, Eye Park
September	Annual Pie Sale
October	Italian-American Heritage Dinner
November	Turkey Raffle
December 10th	Holiday Gathering Eyer Building



Attend meetings

**whether in person or by Zoom and
be a more active and informed member
of the lodge.**

Meeting ID: 886 8759 8885 and passcode is 5fejz6

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/88687598885?pwd=k0Okv9fYp3llkNiaefMdbj80frcNF6.1>

February Birthdays



- 2/3 Patricia Galante
- 2/8 Valerie Watt
- 2/9 James Caternolo
- 2/11 Sandra Witmer
- 2/12 Joseph Galante
- 2/18 Stephen Cataldi
- 2/20 Vivien Sciortino
- 2/21 Frank Giancaterin
- 2/27 Sany Meleca
- 2/28 Joe Capogreco

Get Well Wishes

Sandy Meleca
 Rosita Caridi-Miller
 Dawn DiGennaro's wife, Nancy
 Vince Giannantonio and Family
 Patty and Gordie Rask
 Ross Cottone



St. Valentine (San Valentino) was a Roman priest who secretly married persecuted Christian couples. He was martyred on February 14, 269 for refusing to renounce his faith.

Note from Our Corresponding Secretary, Pat Bartholomew

My duties include keeping the lodge informed of any news regarding our members, such as illnesses/hospitalizations, weddings, graduations, birthdays, passings-on, etc. So, if you have any news you'd like to share with the lodge, please contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Pat Bartholomew
 Cell: 585-503-3297

Email: pattyj7586@aol.com



Say I Love You in Italian

Ti amo (I love you.)

Sei tutto per me (You are everything to me)

Ti voglio bene (I care about you)

Mi piaci molto (I like you a lot)

Sei il grande amore della mia vita (You are the love of my life)

Ti adoro (I adore you)

Sei speciale per me (You are special to me)

Per te farei di tutto (For you I'd do anything)

Voglio stare sempre con te (I want to be with you always)

Per sempre nel mio cuore (Forever in my heart)



Heritage Dinner Awards

Do you know an Italian American who has made an impact or difference in our community? At our Heritage Dinner during Italian Heritage Month, we honor prominent local Italian Americans who have served our community and made an impact. Some past recipients include:

- ◆ The Archetko Family, owner of Otto Tomatoes, that helps to feed those in need and has a spaghetti dinner to honor Mamma where all the proceeds go to the food pantry.
- ◆ Mary Jo Colligan at Angels of Mercy who fights human trafficking.
- ◆ Sr. Diana Dolce, founder of Hope Hall, a private non-sectarian school with a collaborative approach to learning that connects faculty, staff and families as team members in a community of learning.
- ◆ Elaine Spauld heads the Center for Youth which that partners with youth to realize their full potential by creating opportunities, removing barriers and promoting social justice.

We are looking for nominees for **Woman of the Year**, **Man of the Year**, and **Lifetime Achievement**. Please send names of candidates to Marjorie Focarazzo at mafocarazzo@gmail.com and why they deserve to be honored by the Vincent Lombardi Lodge.

SOMETHING TO THINK
ABOUT...

True maturity is the quiet realization that the most exquisite luxuries in life are those that money cannot buy. As the noise of ambition fades, the heart begins to beat for the essentials: the vitality of our bodies, the warmth of a loving home, the anchor of stability, and the sublime silence of a peaceful mind. We don't need the world to notice us; we only need a few precious souls beside us and a soul that is finally at rest.

The beauty of life is found in having enough of what truly matters.

Local Vincent Lombardi Lodge Scholarships

Applications available at all Monroe County schools and 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, 2026**. 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



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Rochester, NY

Keeping families close™

CHARITY
SPOTLIGHT

Ronald McDonald House Makes a Difference for Families and Children

Parents don't know when their children will need medical help. But they should know they can always access the care they need and Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester will support children and families during the most critical time of their life.



Since 1990 the 24-bedroom **McDonald House** at 333 Westmoreland Drive has offered a welcoming and restful space for families traveling to Rochester for their child's medical care. Families have access to private bedrooms with baths, a fully equipped kitchen, complimentary laundry, quiet lounges, healing gardens, play areas, and nourishing meals and snacks. Transportation to area medical facilities is available.

Volunteers are essential in organizing the closets and attic, cleaning common areas, driving the vans, maintaining the kitchen, and beautifying the gardens. Each task is a step toward making families feel at home.

The 7-bedroom **House Within The Hospital**, located just steps from the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Golisano Children's Hospital, has offered a calming and supportive environment for families of critically ill or injured children since 2005. Each room includes a private bathroom, and families have access to a kitchen and laundry facilities.

The **Ronald McDonald Family Room at Unity Hospital** offers a peaceful space for pediatric families to rest and recharge. Families can enjoy complimentary coffee, cold beverages, healthy snacks, and fresh-baked cookies.

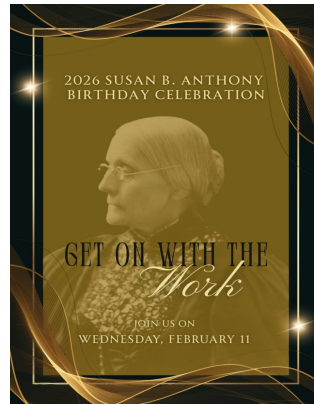


Besides Family Rooms within partnering hospitals, families can also access the Guest Pass program at Golisano Children's Hospital for meal vouchers and daytime respite.

In addition to monetary gifts, donations from the Ronald McDonald House Charities **Wish List** on Amazon help stock pantries, keep facilities clean, and fulfill urgent needs. These essential items ensure that families have everything they need so they can focus on their child's health and well-being.

Your donation helps RMHC families feel at home. Even when they can't be.

February in Rochester



Besides these special events, February invites us to slow down, warm up, and savor the simple comforts of winter. Whether you're planning a romantic Valentine's Day, searching for family fun during winter break, or just trying to stay active and inspired, here are experiences worth seeking out this month.

Do a Book Crawl



Make book browsing an adventure. Visit an independent bookstore, then explore a few Monroe County Library branches with standout reading areas. A free library card allows you to access 31 Monroe County libraries. Trade gently used books at Little Free Libraries along the way.



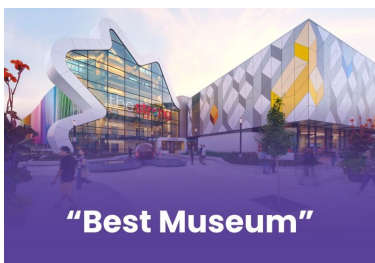
Take a Winter Hike

Bare trees, soft light, and peaceful pathways make winter a beautiful time to walk. Feed the chickadees at Mendon Ponds, wander Highland Park's quietest corners, witness the frozen falls at Niagara Falls, or explore the snow-dusted gorge at Letchworth. Each destination offers a unique perspective of the Rochester area's natural beauty, from snow-covered parks to picturesque waterfronts.



Explore Rochester Museums

Rochester is home to world-renowned museums and thought-provoking galleries.



Try the Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester Museum and Science Center and Strasenburgh Planetarium, George Eastman Museum, or the Strong National Museum of Play for a warm, inspiring day indoors. You can spend weeks exploring our rich cultural heritage.



February Celebrations in Italy

February is a charming month for an Italy tour, featuring romantic experiences, festive carnivals, and winter delights. Whether you're seeking romance or reveling in lively celebrations, Italy in February offers a memorable experience this winter.

Masks, wild costumes, confetti, fried *frappe* and *castagnole* – it's Carnival season in Venice. Every year, tens of thousands of visitors from all over the world descend on the floating city for three weeks of water parades, street-art performances the cuisine, and good drink. This year's Carnival coincides with Italy hosting the [Winter Olympics](#).

On Thursday, January 22nd the Olympic Flame crossed through the romantic, lagoon city of Venice. The flame arrived near dusk in Venice's Piazzale Roma, the main bus terminal. It crossed the Ponte delle Guglie in Cannaregio to the arched Rialto Bridge. It was loaded onto a boat to navigate the Grand Canal toward the wooden Accademia Bridge.



The 2026 Winter Olympics, officially named *Milano Cortina 2026*, will be co-hosted by Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo in Italy from February 6-22, 2026, featuring ice sports in Milan and mountain events in the Alps, marking Italy's third time hosting the Winter Games, with events like figure skating in Milan and bobsled in Cortina. The 2026 theme "Olympus: the origins of play" celebrates how Venice's centuries-old Carnival traditions – human pyramids, canal regattas, competitions in the squares – link to the Olympic spirit. It's the perfect opportunity to experience the rich culture of Milan while witnessing world-class athletic performances.

February 24—29, 2026: *Festival di Sanremo*



Italy's prestigious music festival in Sanremo, featuring live performances by popular Italian and international artists. The *Festival della Canzone Italiana*, universally known as Sanremo, returns to the Teatro Ariston for its 76th edition in February 2026. For five consecutive evenings, this Ligurian coastal town transforms into the undisputed centre of Italian popular culture, broadcasting live to millions of viewers and setting the musical agenda for the year ahead.

Sanremo is not merely a song contest. It is a national ritual, a week-long conversation piece that dominates Italian discourse from office coffee machines to parliamentary corridors. The festival has launched careers that defined generations — from Domenico Modugno's revolutionary "*Nel blu dipinto di blu*" in 1958 to Måneskin's explosive "*Zitti e buoni*" in 2021, which subsequently won Eurovision and introduced Italian rock to a global audience.

Carnivals in Italy

Italy's February carnivals provide a festive atmosphere and a glimpse into the country's rich traditions

Italy in February is a hidden gem, a land where the echoes of history meet the vibrant colors of modern life. From the enchanting Carnival of Venice to the romantic Verona Opera Festival, Italy is brimming with cultural and artistic events that will captivate any visitor. Embrace the winter charm by skiing in the picturesque Italian Alps or savoring the delectable cuisine in Bologna. Whether you're a history buff, a food enthusiast, or a lover of the arts, Italy in February is sure to provide an unforgettable experience.

February in Italy is dominated by the colorful pre-Lenten celebrations of **Carnevale**, featuring famous events in Venice (masquerades, balls) and Viareggio (parades, floats), plus unique regional festivities like the orange battle in Ivrea.

In February, Venice transforms into a magical realm, accentuated by the iconic Venice Carnival. Also, February's misty mornings and soft winter light create a unique ambiance, perfect for photography and leisurely strolls through the winding streets. You can explore Venice's romantic canals and historic architecture, which are especially enchanting in the quieter winter months. A gondola ride through the less crowded canals offers a serene experience while visiting St. Mark's Basilica and the Doge's Palace provides insight into the city's rich history.

The **Venice Carnival**, dating back to the 12th century, is renowned for its elaborate masks and costumes. Held from late January to Shrove Tuesday, the festival features grand masquerade balls, street performances, and parades. The tradition of intricate mask-making, with styles like the "bauta" and "colombina," continues to captivate visitors, offering a unique blend of historical and modern festivities.



The **Putignano Carnival** is one of the oldest and most famous carnivals in the world. The celebrations take place in Putignano, a town in the sunniest region of Italy, Puglia.

The **Farinella** is the signature mask of the Putignano Carnival, named after a local dish. A fusion of Harlequin and Jolly Joker, it wears a colourful costume with city-themed colours and a bicorne with bells. Representing the lively and proud character of locals, it symbolizes the spirit of Putignano.

The **Carnival of Ivrea** is a festival in the Northern Italian city of Ivrea that includes a tradition of throwing oranges between organized groups, known as the "Battle of the Oranges". It is the largest food fight in Italy and surrounding countries.



The Bookshelf

Reading books adds endless benefits to our daily lives, including stress-relief and entertainment.

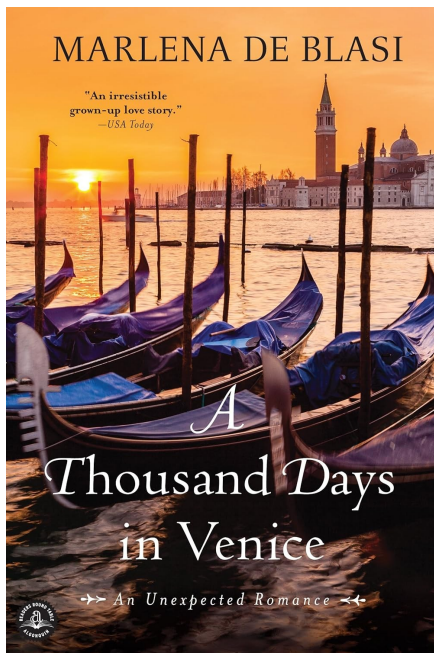
Reading may also improve our concentration and memory, expand our vocabulary, enhance our knowledge, and increase our imagination and creativity.



This Month's Selections is *A Thousand Days in Venice*

A Thousand Days in Venice by Marlena de Blasi

is a memoir about an American chef who falls in love with a Venetian man, marries him, and moves to Italy, navigating cultural differences and finding love and self-discovery in the city.



Fernando first sees Marlena across the Piazza San Marco and falls in love from afar. When he sees her again in a Venice café a year later, he knows it is fate. He knows little English; she, a divorced American chef traveling through Italy, speaks only food-based Italian. Marlena thought she was done with romantic love, incapable of intimacy. Yet within months of their first meeting, she has quit her job, sold her house in St. Louis, kissed her two grown sons good-bye, and moved to Venice to marry “the stranger,” as she calls Fernando.

This deliciously satisfying memoir is filled with the foods and flavors of Italy and peppered with culinary observations and recipes. But the main course here is an enchanting true story about a woman who falls in love with both a man and a city, and finally finds the home she didn't even know she was missing.

Marlena de Blasi has been a chef, a journalist, a food and wine consultant, and a restaurant critic. She is the author of two cookbooks, *Regional Foods of Northern Italy* (a James Beard Foundation Award finalist) and *Regional Foods of Southern Italy*. She and her husband, Fernando, now direct gastronomic tours through Tuscany and Umbria.





Italian Charities of America
Founded 1936

Let's Not Lose Our Italian American Culture!*

Zoom Event:

Wednesday, February 11th 2026 | 7:00pm EST

The rich culture that members of the Italian American Baby Boomer generation experienced are slowly being lost. Some reasons for the erosion of our traditions are: intermarrying with other ethnicities, the desire of the older generation to have their children become American, protection from prejudice/bigotry, the severe reduction of Italian immigrants due to very low immigration quotas during the 1920's thru the 1940's, newer generations moving out of Italian American enclaves, extended families and grandparents no longer living in close proximity to each other, Italian or other regional languages no longer being used at home, mothers joining the workforce, and the natural course of assimilation into American life.

Please register to receive your Zoom link for this virtual event!

Phone: 718-478-3100 or email info@italiancharities.org

*This free event is given by Italian Charities of America
as a part of their Italian American Speaker Series.*

*This Speaker Series is sponsored by Italian Charities of America
with funding from The Giambelli Foundation
and NYC Discretionary Funding from Council Member Robert Holden.*

*Presented by **Mark Hehl**, author of *Ameri Sicula: Sicilian Culture in America* and *An Immigrant's Dilemma*



The Commission for Social Justice® (CSJ) is the anti-defamation arm of the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America® (OSDIA), the biggest and oldest national organization for men and women of Italian descent in the United States. The CSJ was founded in 1979 to fight the stereotyping of Italian Americans by the entertainment, advertising and media industries. It also collaborates with other groups to ensure that of all races, religions and cultures are treated with dignity and respect.

Through its Positive Image Program, the CSJ regularly informs the media and general public about Italian American achievements, contributions, history and culture.

OSDIA Vincent Lombardi Lodge
37 Farnsworth Road N
Rochester NY 14623

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Jeremy DiFilippo

Vice-President

Catherine (Kitty) DiNicola

Recording Secretary

Patricia Bartholomew

Corresponding Secretary

Patricia Bartholomew

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Phillip Dattilo*

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Marjorie Focarazzo

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