



The Roar of the Lion

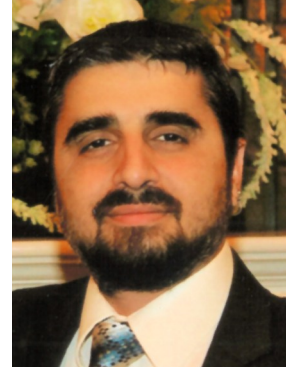
January 2026

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. 2025 has been a very successful year for our lodge with a few minor bumps here and there that often ended up working to our benefit.

We look forward to having another fun and prosperous year, continuing to host many of our usual annual events, but also introducing some new ideas that I think everyone will enjoy. The Cultural Preservation Committee is coming up with some great plans for presentations and after-meeting festivities. For example, we will be celebrating the tradition of *La Befana* at our January meeting on the 8th. The committee is always looking for new ideas or people who would like to share their family's journey as Italian-Americans or anyone who would like to make a presentation on Italian history or facts. Just contact Becky at seqra2@gmail.com or talk to her after a meeting.

As a reminder, there's a black suggestion box that I put out at every meeting, usually next to the donation boxes. I'm always looking for ideas or advice for the lodge and our meetings.



New Year Resolution



**Lets work together to make 2026
another wonderful year.**

Felice anno nuovo! Auguri!

Jeremy DiFilippo

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EDITOR

Annette DeCarolis\

2026 Vincent Lombardi Lodge Calendar

January 8 th	6:00 Council Meeting
January 8 th	7:00 General Assembly Meeting
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 Bushman Cabin, Henrietta Veterans' Memorial Park
May	Spaghetti Dinner
May 23rd	Memorial Day Parade East Rochester
July 9th	Scholarship Awards Night Eye 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 Eye Building

In 2026

**be a more active and informed member
of the lodge.**

Attend meetings

whether in person or by Zoom.

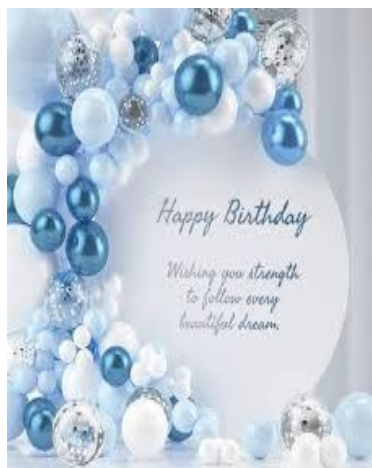


Vi auguro un Buon e Prospero Nuovo

Meeting ID: 816 1122 4522—Passcode: 906332

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

January Birthdays



- 1/1 Mary Kosinsky
- 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



Get Well Wishes

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

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: 585-869-5062
 Email: pattyj7586@aol.com



Winter Picnic and Clambake

Sunday, February 1st 1:00 PM

Bushman Lodge, Veteran's Memorial Park, Henrietta
 Buffet \$25/member \$30 nonmember \$10/doz. Clams

RSVP by January 18, 2026

Order for clams cannot be taken after January 26th
 Reservations are required ~No Walk-ins~No Refunds

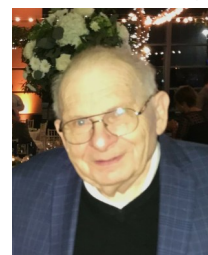
As in the past, members are asked to bring an appetizers or dessert.



Make Checks payable to Vincent Lombardi Lodge #2270 and mail to Marisa Przepiora at 2453 Wheeler Station Road, E. Bloomfield, NY 14469
 Request an invoice to pay online: sending email to marisaprze@gmail.com

We love to have guests, so invite your friends.

In Memory of



**William A. Agnello
 1934-2025**

Our condolences to
Linda Agnello,
 his loving wife of 56 years.
 The most important part of his life was his family and friends.

From the Financial Secretary

We are once again moving into a new year with **NO** increase to our member dues,
We thank you for your continued membership in our lodge and look forward to seeing you in 2026!

REMINDER OF DUES RENEWAL

2026 dues invoices will be emailed during the first week of December, so please keep an eye out, and don't forget to check your junk mail if you haven't seen the invoice by the end of the week. Please note, **your prompt dues payment saves us money** and is part of what helps us keep annual dues the same! When dues are paid by the stated due date of December 31, 2025, we save on costs associated with printing, mailing and postage to send 2nd and 3rd notices out. These costs add up, and every prompt dues payment helps offset those costs.

UPDATING MEMBER LIST

In January we have to reconcile our member list to the Grand Lodge. \$34 of your \$65 dues goes to the Grand Lodge each year for our per capita taxes. Our member list must be accurate at the beginning of the year so that we aren't overcharged by the Grand Lodge for members who don't end up renewing. Please send payment prior to the deadline of 12/31/25. And while we hate to lose even one member, we do understand that life happens and you may decide you will not be renewing. If this is the case, simply send an email to vincentlombardilodge@gmail.com to let us know and we will remove you from the list.

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

To pay by Check

Print the invoice linked at the beginning of this newsletter and mail it with your payment to:

Marisa Przepiora,
2453 Wheeler Station Rd
Bloomfield, NY 14469

To pay by Credit Card:

Email vincentlombardilodge@gmail.com to request an invoice be sent to your email with a link for credit card payment.

~OR~ See Marisa at the December General Assembly Meeting and Holiday Gathering to pay using our credit card swipe machine.

A \$3 transaction fee will be added for this option. (This covers the fees our lodge pays for utilizing credit card payments).

However you choose to pay, you also have the option to include a donation to our lodge operating fund, our lodge scholarship fund, our local lodge charities and/or our Grand Lodge charities.

Please write all amounts paid on the invoice when mailing and include the names of all members whose dues are being paid so that we make sure dues payments are properly applied to your membership.

We thank you for your continued membership in our lodge and look forward to seeing you in 2026!



Papa Antolini Turkey Raffle

Saturday, Nov. 15th - College Greene Community Room

Performance by the Roc City Singers directed Judith Ranaletta



December 11th Holiday Gathering



Snowman's Soup

Local Vincent Lombardi Lodge Scholarships

Applications will be sent to all Monroe County schools in January 2026.
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, 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

Angels of Mercy

NEW YORK

**CHARITY
SPOTLIGHT**

Angels of Mercy, founded in 2009 by Mary Jo Gugino-Colligan, believes every woman has what it takes to go from victim to victor. The work that the Angels of Mercy does is so important to the women and children in our community as well as around the world.

Dress a Girl Around the World

One of the projects of Angels of Mercy is providing handmade dresses to little girls in the US and third world countries who are at risk for being kidnapped into human trafficking. It is an important task which they do not treat lightly. Too many young girls have no one to care for them and are often abused. Our goal is to provide dignity and hope and let girls know that they are loved, wearing "God's best Dress." The Dress a Girl label on the outside indicates that an organization is looking after these girls, hopefully causing predators to pass them over.



DRESS A GIRL

SEWING EVENTS

Irondequoit Public Library
1290 Titus Ave

1:00-4:00 PM

January 20, 2026

March 17, 2026

May 19, 2026

July 21, 2026

September 15, 2026

November 27, 2026

It is wonderful to see the hearts of women and children that have embraced this worthy cause!

We have grown to well over 650 participants across New York and Canada that have are coming together regularly to sew in their homes, churches and clubs and then sending finished dresses to Angels of Mercy to be taken to missions within our country and around the world. To date, we here in NY State have dressed and blessed more than 1,150,00 young girls in 75 different countries.

Interested in Volunteering?

Email us: volunteers.aomny@aol.com

Other ministries: The Butterfly Boutique ~

Anti-Human Trafficking Awareness & Education ~ Beauty for Ashes

For information about how you can become involved with Angels of Mercy and touch the lives of others in need, please kindly call out office directly at: 585-730-4556.

Giving is not just about making a donation.

It's about making a difference.


Theater in Rochester

Italian Film Series

Saturday, January 24, 2026—4:00 PM

Nazareth Arts Center's Peace Theater





Beat the Blahs!

Our way to cope with the winter doldrums and relax after the holidays, by enjoying great opera in the company of other fans
Refreshments at intermission.

Sundays, 1-5 pm at the Pittsford Recreation Center
All productions with English subtitles
See registration instructions below

The Golden Century of Italian Opera

January 11
Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*, with Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazon, is the charming opera buffa story of the village stalwart, Nemorino, who wins the girl, Adina, against the opposition of a preening army sergeant and his own humility, with the help of a 'magic potion.'

January 18
Bellini's *Norma*, with Montserrat Caballe and Jon Vickers, two of the greatest singers of their time, Theatre Antique d'Orange, 1974. Set in Roman times amidst the conflict between the Romans and the Druid people of Britain, this is the tragic story of the Druid High Priestess who has betrayed her vows and her people with a secret lover, the Roman proconsul, Pollione. He betrays her in turn with the young priestess, Adalgisa.

January 25
Rossini's *La gazza ladra*, from the Cologne Opera with Ileana Cotrubas and Nucci Condo, 1987, is a semi-serious opera with a happy ending. Fabrizio wishes his son to marry Ninetta, their serving girl, but she is accused of stealing a silver spoon and condemned to death. All is saved, however, when the true culprit is revealed.

February 1
Verdi's *Nabucco*, The Metropolitan Opera, with Juan Pons, Maria Guleghina and Samuel Ramey, 2002. This opera, which began Verdi's career, is based on the experience of the Jews in the Babylonian Captivity. Full of thrilling scenes, it was wildly popular in Italy at the beginnings of the Risorgimento and gave them their unofficial national anthem, the famous chorus *Va Pensiero*.

All registration is through the Pittsford Community Center
The cost is \$10/week.
Registration will begin at 12:00am (midnight) on **December 2** for residents and on **December 9** for non-residents.

- Online at www.townofpittsford.org
- In person on the day of the event (you may also register for subsequent operas)
- Using the registration form in the Pittsford Recreation brochure

Pittsford Community Center
35 Lincoln Ave., Pittsford, NY. Parking in rear.

Directions
From Route 31 coming from the direction of Pittsford Plaza, past the bridge, turn right onto Sutherland Street. At the first stop sign, turn left onto Lincoln. The Recreation Center is on your right.

Coming from the intersection of Main Street and Route 31, Pittsford, turn onto Rte 31 West, turn left onto Sutherland Street, and at the first stop sign, turn left onto Lincoln. The Recreation Center is on your right.

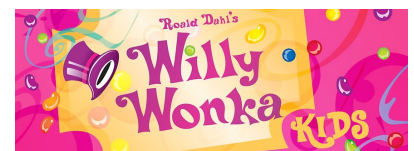
OFC Creations Theatre Center

3450 Winton Place—Free Parking and ADA compliant



Celebrating Bobby Darin
January 23, 2026

Willy Wonka
January 16 at 7PM; January 17 at 2PM and 6PM



Hello, Dolly
January 29-February 15, 2026

The Bookshelf

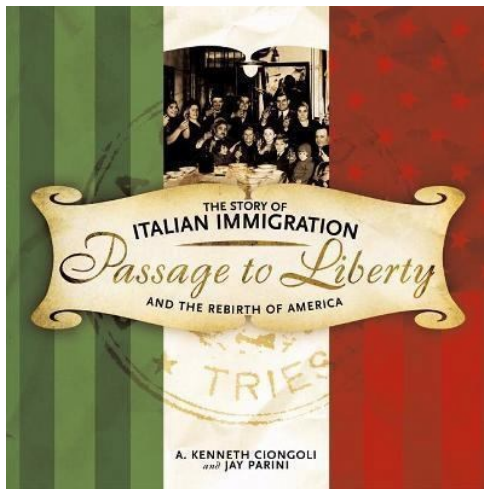
Reading books adds endless benefits to our daily lives, including stress-relief and entertainment.

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 Passage to Liberty

by Jay Parini and A. Kenneth Ciongoli



Passage to Liberty recaptures the drama of the 19th and 20th century immigration to America through photos, letters, and other artifacts—uniquely replicated in three-dimensional facsimile form. In the tradition of *Lest We Forget*, Chronicle's bestselling interactive tour through the African American experience, the text uses the stories of individuals and families—from early explorers, through the wave of 19th century impoverished families, to contemporary figures—to recapture the rich heritage the Italian people carried with them over the waves, and planted anew in the American soil. Among the topics covered here are: The roots of American democracy in Roman history; The migration of 15 million Italians 1880-1920; Catholicism in Italian-American culture; Food, music, and other Italian cultural traditions; The Mafia: myth and reality; Cultural icons: DiMaggio, Sinatra, Madonna and more. As vibrant and packed full of history as previous volumes in this extraordinary series, *Passage to Liberty* is a splendid and loving tribute to the Italian-American experience.



Jay Parini is a celebrated poet, novelist, screenwriter, biographer and literary critic. He is a professor of English & Creative Writing at Middlebury College in Vermont. He is known for addressing the spiritual and ethical dimension of life, asking big questions about the meaning and mystery of human existence

Dr. Ciongoli was past President and Vice Chairman of the National Italian American Foundation. He was a founding member of the Vermont Italian Colonial Association (VICA), a member of The Mutuo Soccorso, the oldest Italian American organization in Vermont and a past member of the Board of Governors of the Ethan Allen Club, the oldest continuous club in North America. A. Kenneth Ciongoli is a trained neurologist with a passion for Italian American history. He is listed in Who's Who in American Medicine and among the Top 100 Italian "movers and shakers" in *Italia* magazine.



Longtime friends, **Jay Parini** and **Ken Ciongoli** also cowrote *Beyond the Godfather: Italian American Writers on the Real Italian American Experience*.

Italian New Year's Dinner Traditions

The traditional New Year's Eve meal is steeped in tradition and each dish has a special meaning. Specific ingredients are used to bring luck, wealth, and happiness. It symbolizes abundance, reflects the hope for prosperity and good fortune.

- *Risotto in bianco* (white risotto): In Piedmont, rice symbolizes coins and prosperity. This makes risotto a popular choice for the occasion.
- **Lentils:** Found in many dishes across Italy, lentils also represent wealth due to their coin-like shape.
- *Cotechino*: A large pork sausage, boiled over low heat for hours, traditionally served with lentils. The famous *cotechino* from Modena holds IGP (legally protected) status but is also popular in Lombardy, Molise, Trentino, and Veneto.
- *Zampone*: Another sausage dish, stuffed into a hollowed-out pig's trotter. When sliced, the pieces resemble coins, symbolizing – you guessed it – prosperity.
- *Tortellini in brodo*: A comforting dish of stuffed pasta served in a flavorful broth, is often a highlight of New Year's meals.



Fish and seafood: Particularly along the coasts, dishes featuring fish and seafood are believed to bring good luck and are a common part of the festive menu.

Some of the most popular Italian Christmas foods, especially fish and seafood are a main staple through late December and early January.



In the sweet treats department, panettone is the winner. It symbolizes prosperity and togetherness. Pandoro, a star-shaped, buttery cake is often dusted with powdered sugar. These traditions go back to the ancient Romans who gave each other jars of dates and figs in honey with a bay branch for good fortune, and is still carried on in Naples today where figs are exchanged wrapped in laurel leaves.

These desserts are paired with a glass of sparkling Prosecco or Spumante to toast the arrival of the new year.





Celebrations in Italy

San Silvestro: In Italy, New Year's Eve is another saint's feast day: that of **San Silvestro**, a pope about whom little is known beyond the fact that he died on December 31st. Italians celebrate San Silvestro in much the same way as everyone else around the world: with New Year's Eve parties (*veglioni di Capodanno*), fireworks (*fuochi d'artificio*), counting down to midnight (*fare il conto alla rovescia*) and toasts (*brindisi*) when it arrives.



More local traditions include playing **tombola** (a kind of bingo), giving and wearing red underwear for luck, and chucking your junk out the window in preparation for new beginnings.

Befana: The Christmas witch, **La Befana**, hops on her broomstick to distribute presents to boys and girls on the *vigilia dell'Epifania*, or the eve of Epiphany. Legend holds that the Three Wise Men came to her house and invited her to join their search for Christ. She was too busy with housework so declined, but later changed her mind, and to this day is still searching for the child, leaving presents for any good children she encounters.



Epifania: Occurs on January 6th when the Three Wise Men make it to the stable to find baby Jesus and bring him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. It's a public holiday, so children and parents alike still receive the gift of closed schools and a day off work.

Experience Italy in January

Italy in January is a hidden gem waiting to be discovered by those who seek the magic of winter amidst historic landscapes. The country transforms into a serene wonderland, where snow-dusted rooftops, quiet cobblestone streets, and a peaceful ambiance replace the bustling tourist scenes of summer. From the snowy Alps to the misty canals of Venice, Italy offers a unique experience in January that combines cultural richness with the cozy charm of the winter season.

An elderly couple was flying to Hawaii for a two-week vacation to celebrate their 50th anniversary. Suddenly, over the public address system, the captain announces, “Ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid I have some very bad news. Our engines have ceased functioning, and we will attempt an emergency landing. Luckily, I see an uncharted island below us, and we should be able to land on the beach. However, the odds are that we may never be rescued and will have to live on the island for the rest of our lives.” Thanks to the skill of the flight crew, the plane lands safely on the island.



An hour later, the husband turns to his wife and asks, “Honey, did we pay the car bill this month?”
“No, sweetheart,” she responds.
Still shaken from the crash landing, he then asks, “Did we pay our credit card bill yet?”
“Oh no! I’m sorry. I forgot to send the check,” she says.
“One last thing, did you remember to pay the medical bill for the hospital visit last month?” he asks.
“Oh, forgive me, sweetheart,” begged the wife. “I didn’t send that one, either.”
The husband grabs her and gives her the biggest hug in 50 years. She pulls away and asks him, “What was the hug for?”
The husband answers, “They’ll find us!”...

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Vice-President

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Recording Secretary

Patricia Bartholomew

Corresponding Secretary

Patricia Bartholomew

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Marjorie Focarazzo

**Vincent Lombardi Lodge communications should be sent to:
President Jeremy DiFilippo, 37 Farnsworth Road N, Rochester NY 14623
jjd1976.osdia@gmail.com**