



Casa Italiana of Dutchess County dba “The Italian Center”

A Cultural Organization [Organized in 1928](#) to Promote, Preserve, and Celebrate
Our Italian, and Italian American, History, Heritage, Culture, and Traditions

1195 Route 376, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 USA Phone (845) 454-1492 (Leave Message)

[Facebook](#) | [Website](#) | [Membership](#) | [Member Portal](#) | [Contact](#)

MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER

Bar Opens for Members and their Guests on Bocce Nights (Mondays 6:00PM-8:00PM).
Come! Enjoy Your Club! Watch the Matches, a Game On TV, and/or Otherwise Socialize!

Members' Meeting – Tuesday, May 5th, 2026

Cocktail hour (Cash Bar) starts 5:00PM - Dinner begins 6:00PM - Business 7:00PM - Dinner cost is \$30.

ATTENDEES ONLY MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING - Paid Dues/Not in Suspension - Reservation Necessary!

Member Quorum necessary to conduct business. Please attend at 7:00PM even if you cannot participate in the dinner.

Menu - Meal Prepared by Chef Billy Schiffer

Antipasto:	Traditional Italian antipasto with select meats and cheeses over a bed of lettuce with Italian dressing
Primo:	
Secondo:	[Piatto Unico] Cheese lasagna served with meatballs and sausage
Dolce:	Chef's choice

Ernie Bruno is on vacation this first week of May, so contact Lou Piro (845-629-8905 or president@theitaliancenter.com) for May Meeting Night reservations. For future reservations, contact Ernie Bruno (845-594-5700 or hpsinger@optonline.net) by the Sunday before the dinners.

Provincial Night – Tuesday, May 19th, 2026

Honoring Sicilia/Tutte (All Provinces). Cash Bar starts 6:00PM - Dinner begins 7:00PM

Hosted by Franco Giangrasso and Family who always give us a PN da maravigghiari/stupiri (that will blow your socks off)!

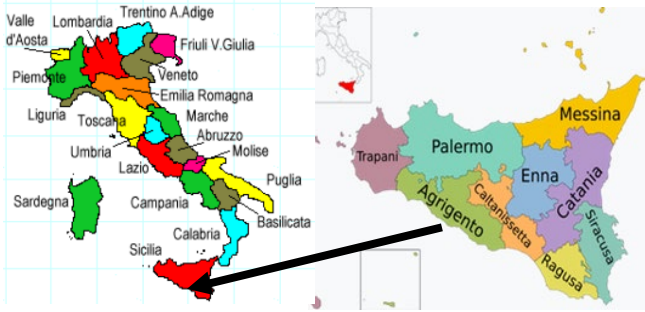
Don't miss it! It will be una serata **unforgettable!** SIGN-UP SOON!

Reservation Necessary! Contact Ernie Bruno (845-594-5700 or hpsinger@optonline.net) - \$40 Member / \$45 Guest

Menu - Meal Prepared by Chef Billy Schiffer

Antipasto:	TBD
Primo:	TBD
Secondo:	TBD
Dolce:	TBD

FOR A FULL EVENT CALENDAR, CHECK OUT [HTTPS://THEITALIANCENTER.COM/EVENTS/](https://theitaliancenter.com/events/)



In May We Celebrate the Regione di Sicilia

In May we honor the Regione di Sicilia/Sicilia/ Sicily, in Southern Italy (Il Meridione). Sicilia occupies about 8.5% of Italy and has about 8.3% of its people (5.1M). Its population density is about 46% of Campania's. It is hilly (61.4%) and mountainous (24.5%), and only a small portion (14.1%) is flat. Along the northern coast, the mountain ranges of Madonie (6,600 ft), Nebrodi (5,900 ft), and Peloritani (4,300 ft), are an extension of the mainland Apennines. Etna, an active volcano, stands over Catania. Sicily's climate (like NC/SC) is amenable to farming, so Sicily is intensively cultivated wherever possible (mostly inland).

Indeed agriculture, tourism, and shipping constitute the bulk of Sicily's economy. Today's Sicily (Spring 2026) faces significant challenges. There has been a persistent drought (Sicily is one of the southern regions most affected by water shortages), that negatively affected its agricultural production - thanks Mother Nature - and to "add insult to injury", unexpected high fuel prices now further disproportionately negatively impact Sicily's agricultural economy - thanks USA! Seems neither force will abate, with geopolitics immutably in negative tension, and with Mother Nature attacking on all fronts including seismic events at sea (magnitude 3.7) that will disrupt Sicily's shipping industry negatively. Add to that, truckers are protesting high fuel prices and threatening to stop goods in Sicilian ports. BUT, despite all the consternation that Sicily faced/faces, it is a relatively affordable, relaxing, beautiful, interesting place; a fascinating window into ancient history and cultures, and consistently 4-5 star rated by tourists! It combines well preserved ancient historical sites, abundant pleasant weather, a 5-star tourist industry, strikingly beautiful beaches, spas, and farm country, and above all, a relaxed friendly atmosphere that only Sicily can offer! Sicily was/is a "melting pot". There one can leisurely explore a potpourri of Mediterranean ancient history and then enjoy a game of "scupa" and sip some Chinotto in the land of the chinotto!

Exploring Ancient Glory & Epic Ruins in The Valley of the Temples!



On Sicily's south-western coast one finds the province of Agrigento! There one can relax, enjoy the Sun, and explore well preserved archaeological sites. Truly enchanting, with flowering almond trees and inviting

stretches of beach, but Agrigento's claim to fame is its uniquely impressive ensemble of Hellenic architecture. In Agrigento is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, La Valle dei Templi or **The Valley of the Temples!** Undoubtedly one of the most important vestige of ancient classical culture one can find anywhere. It comprises the temples of the gods, as well as many other necropolis and sanctuaries. To name a few, the **Temple of the Dioscuri**, Castor and Pollux, the legendary twins born from the union of the queen of Sparta with Jupiter (its four columns the symbol of the city of Agrigento), **The Temple of Olympian Zeus** built to thank the god Zeus for the 480 BC victory of the Agrigentines over the Carthaginians (one also finds the **Telamones**, gigantic statues with human features), and **The Temple of Concordia**, also built around the 5th century BC, that many say is the best preserved of its ilk. If you want a video vicarious tour of some of The Valley of the Temples click this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABR807XvJpk>.

Check This Out



Arba Sicula



The Dawn of Sicily

Arba Sicula, a non-profit international organization, promotes Sicilian language/culture. My father loved its stuff! Check it out! If you like, join (costs little) and support the cultural effort! <https://arbasicula.org/>

Paul Waldbillig's 21 April 2026 Liguria "Provincial Night" Was Indimenticabile (Unforgettable)
Paul put his heart into making this night special as he does for the MANY things he does for the Club!



Much Socializing and Good Cheer - Staff /Volunteers Efficient/Helpful - The Meal Superb - The Large Crowd Pleased -The Prizes Grand

PROVINCIAL NIGHTS ARE SPECIAL – INVITE FRIENDS AND FAMILY – FUN & FINE FOOD

Next Provincial Night May 19th, 2026. Honoring Sicilia/Tutte/All Provinces (Hosted by Giangrasso Family)

Region	Date	Province	Sponsor(s)	Region	Date	Province	Sponsor(s)
Calabria	20-Jan-26	Catanzaro	Pat Fasolino	Lombardia	21-Jul-26	Milano	TBD
Toscana	17-Feb-26	Firenze	Tom Viani	Sardegna	18-Aug-26	Cagliari	TBD
Campania	17-Mar-26	Napoli	Mancarella Bros.	Puglia	15-Sep-26	Bari	Frank LaManna
Liguria	21-Apr-26	Genova	Paul Waldbillig	Lazio	20-Oct-26	Latina	Tony Daniele
Sicilia	19-May-26	Tutte (all)	Giangrasso Family	Basilicata	17-Nov-26	Matera	Frank Marinaro
Abruzzo	16-Jun-26	L'Aquila	Alberto Tripoli	No Provincial Night in December 2026 – Next 19 January 2027			



MUST WE REITERATE? PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO BE A PN SPONSOR!

Sponsor any TBD (No Sponsor Yet) date! Honor its designated, or any open, regione!

It's Fun, It's an Honor, It's Appreciated, It's Necessary for the Club's Viability!

Note: Regions Not Normally Duplicated in Same Year

<u>Region On Schedule</u>	<u>Logical Replacements Open</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Date</u>
Lombardia	Friuli-Venezia Giulia Piemonte Trentino-Alto Adige Valle d'Aosta Veneto	TBD	21-Jul-26
Sardegna	Emilia-Romagna Marche Molise Umbria	TBD	18-Aug-26

Italian roots? Use www.ancestry.com or www.italymondo.com to help you connect! Honor your antenati italiani via Provincial Night support!
Also, [here is a link that shows how Italy's Regions \(States\) evolved!](#)



We need volunteers to help to assist with setup, serving, and cleanup! We also need sponsors to fill in the TBDs!

Please contact Lou Piro at (845) 629-8905 or lgpiro@hotmail.com



Captain a Table, Fill It with Friends and Family, Volunteer to Entertain, Have Great Food and Good Cheer!



2026 IS THE ITALIAN CENTER'S 5TH YEAR OF NEW ACTIVE LIFE IN ITS NEW DIGS!

LET'S MAKE IT A GRAND 5TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR!

The 5th anniversary's ancient theme was represented in wood, exemplifying strength, and durability, much like a tree.

Today, silver is more commonly used as its theme, as it also represents those things, and being precious and pure. The Italian Center is and should be strong, durable, and precious to us. Also, it is and should be pure, i.e., true to its charter, unselfish, and dedicated to its mission. **La Casa Italiana mission, in a nutshell:**



To foster a cultural connection among members, to preserve Italian traditions, to educate others in such, and to enhance the image of Italian Americans in the community we serve. It brings together people of similar heritage and encourages them to help one another, and it provides resources, activities and events that foster camaraderie, understanding, and that bring some joy into our lives, and the lives of others.



The Italian Center has long stood as a symbol of Italian pride and an integral part of the Hudson River Valley landscape. When you join the Italian Center (La Casa Italiana), you take on its mission. Only we members can make our "Casa" great and true to its mission. In this 5th Anniversary of our NEW chapter of life, let us reflect on that 100+-year-old mission and rededicate ourselves to it.

IN 2026 WE REVIVE A MEMBER MEETING CUSTOM THAT WE ABANDONED 6 YEARS AGO; ONE THAT ADDED TO THE MEETING'S SOCIABILITY!



The After-Meeting Snack Buffet Is Back!

After A Sumptuous Members Meeting Night Dinner And
Being Fed a Bunch of Good Info by The Board in the Meeting,
You Can Break More Bread with Your Brothers and Sisters Before You Leave the Building!
Stay Awhile; Socialize; Share Your Ideas with Board Members!



Pizza really is better in Naples. Some pizza lovers will say they prefer the pizza in Rome, but don't listen to them. There's perfectly good pizza in Rome, don't get me wrong – but the pizza in Naples is an entirely different beast. And since it was Naples where the pizza originated, I'm gonna' go with Naples on this one. Now, depending on who you talk to, you'll get pointed to different pizza places in Naples as the ones with "the best pizza" or "the most authentic pizza" or what have you. I have a favorite, but I also know passionate and smart people who have a different favorite, so I'm willing to believe there's plenty of great pizza to be had in Naples. In fact, I encourage you to try several places and pick your own favorite. There are places serving bad pizza in Naples but keep your eyes open and you'll be able to steer clear of them. Any pizza joint with a crowd of locals milling out front is a good one to try, and if the sign overhead says "vera pizza napoletana" that's usually a good omen, too.

Editor's Note: that was in the April 2011 Newsletter as part of a broader member Newsletter contribution about Naples from now former member **Robert "Bob" Miglino**. Bob is not a member now, why, I don't know, and if I did, I would not get into it (he is a busy accomplished man and "la forza del destino" I'd guess). I just know Bob was a good active member and we need more of those. **Which leads me to this thought:**

The IC wants/needs active members! Recruit eligible people to celebrate our heritage together!

If you know a "lapsed member-in-good-standing" encourage that former member to re-join!

With Investigation Committee OK, and paid dues, the former member will be reinstated without repeating the new member 3 months' application process.

Only members in good standing can attend members-only club functions, get member pricing, apply for Bacile Scholarship, or get any other perk!

President's Letter

Fellow Brothers and Sisters,

Is it just me or did April feel a lot like March? 80's one day and 40's the next. Some brave folks have been out on the golf course but not me. Weather is still too sketchy for me.

April Meeting Night dinner was moved to the following week for members to pay their respects to the passing of Paul Mancarella. Chef Billy prepared a delicious meal of breaded pork chops with vinegar peppers and garlic mashed potatoes.

Diners started out with a simple tossed salad, our usual red and white pasta and cheesecake for dessert. Billy was assisted by Sous Chef Tom Viani and his crew of volunteers Sal Polizzotto, Jeff Williams, Sam Letterii, and John Casulli.

April Provincial Night was hosted by Paul Waldbillig who created a delicious menu! We started with a traditional antipasto plate followed by the usual linguini with garlic and oil and a unique red pasta of Rigatoni alla zozzona – a combination of amatriciana and carbonara with a sausage added. The entrée was a fall off the bone lamb shank with Milanese style risotto. A cannoli finished off this delicious meal. Chef Billy prepared the meal with the assistance of Sous Tom Viani and the volunteer crew: Jeff Williams, Paul Waldbillig, Chris Mark, PJ Grippo, Marc Ouimet, and Lirio Giordani.

Jack Castelli, Lois Gaglione, Chris Sena, Paul Fortunato, and Irene Petro set up the dining room, Ernie Bruno handled reservations, Ray Pantaleo sold cards, Paul Waldbillig sold 50/50 tickets. All these folks did this work for both events! Thank you everyone for your hard work is greatly appreciated!

The bocce league has started! Stop by grab an adult beverage from the bar and watch the action!

We are planning some spring projects, and we will need some volunteers. We'll send out emails asking for help. Please keep our sick and ailing members in your prayers.

Call or email me with any comments, questions or concerns 845-629-8905 – lgpiro@hotmail.com.
I hope to see you around the club!

Fraternally yours,

Lou Piro, President

- *[Please See Our Events below](#), visit [our Website](#) and [our Facebook](#), LIKE us, join our activities, and have some fun.*
- *We once were a Lodge of the Sons of Italy: here is a little [ITALIAN CENTER HISTORY](#).*
- *The [NIDO site](#) that has Italian references and IC cultural stuff categorized for us ([Links to PDFs and Indexes Here](#)).*

Carpe Diem – “Seize the Day” – OK – But More Correctly If I May Spin It – “Enjoy Every Moment You Can”

We usually translate this famous Latin phrase to "seize the day," which encourages to make the most of the present time. That translation implies some heroic effort to grab hold of a situation and make it work for you. Not bad inspiration, but it also implies struggle, conflict, and perhaps some amorality/immorality – as “take advantage of the situation” might also.

Originating from the Roman poet Horace's Odes (23 BC), its literal meaning is more accurately "pluck the day" or "harvest the day," implying enjoyment of the moment like a ripe fruit. That original (probably more correct) meaning does not suggest “struggle” but rather “go with the flow and appreciate what you have before you”!

We have an “**Italian Center**”; it offers us opportunities to enjoy each other and our shared culture (“ripe fruit?”).

Carpe Diem

Special Business - Meeting Minutes Report (April 2026)



President (Lou Piro): A moment of silence was held for Paul Mancarella. The Mancarella family donated the dessert. The Mancarella brothers thanked those that attended the wake; Joe Luna – awarded The Symbol of Freedom Award, an honor presented to recognize individuals for their community service, civic contributions, and commitment to local values. Past recipients include local leaders like (Sheriff) Kirk Imperati, a valued active Club member.

Chairperson of the Board (Ray Pantaleo): None

1st Vice President's Report (Franco Giangrasso): None

2nd Vice President's Report: [Volunteers Needed [Please See List Below.](#)] (Vince Murray) Vince mentioned that the sign from the old IC and placed here was powder coated and welded. The fire and health inspections were completed.

Treasurer's Report (Tom DiGiovanni) and Financial Secretary (Ron Knapp): March Meeting night and Provincial night were very successful, and results will be reported next Meeting night.

Membership (Ron Knapp/Paul Waldbillig) Initiated: None **Balloted and Approved:** Christina Ruggiero (*Tina Ruggiero*), David Tecchio (*Tom Martinelli*), Krystina Cooke (*Andrea McKeVitt*), John Leinung (*Christine Sena*), Elaine Zicchinolfi Leinung (*Christine Sena*), Cesar Rivera (*Eric Violante*). **Read:** Paul Gatta (*Paul Waldbillig*), Dave Gatta (*Paul Waldbillig*), Gerard Musci (*Ray Pantaleo*), Susan Barone (*Tina Ruggiero*)

Marketing/Advertising (TBD): [Editor: also see [Marketing Committee Report](#)]: Tom said that he doesn't have time to chair the committee any longer and is stepping down. Tom said that the Italian Center is looking for a new chair of the committee. The Board is also looking for a volunteer to run the social media presence. The Board offered to pay for Jeanine's dues for the year, but she declined. Lou thanked Tom and Jeanine for their effort.

Wellness (Sal Polizzotto): Jack Castelli received a permanent pacemaker and attended Meeting night but left early. Al Tripoli also received a pacemaker and is recovering. Frank LaManna was dealing with some health issues and was in the hospital but is on the mend.

Victor Bacile Scholarship (Paul Waldbillig): The Bacile Board held their 1st quarter meeting. The first Bacile Scholarship Committee meeting will be held next Monday, April 20th, 6:30pm at the Italian Center. They are looking for volunteers.

Planning Board (Tony Mancarella): Tony said that he and his brother Jack will be personally very busy going forward and doesn't think that a planning board will be needed going forward. He suggested a new board created that works on cultural events.

Entertainment Committee (Ray Pantaleo): Ray mentioned that he is going to organize the Saratoga Bus trip and Columbus Day comedy show. Moe said that the count of the dinner dance is up to 94 and he is excited that there is a younger group coming. He wants to break the 100 attendants. Lastly, he reminded the membership that non-member guests are welcome. Joe Pedota mentioned that the Bocce draft was fun and went well. He also mentioned that next week the courts will be worked on and they can hold practice. Joe Pedota said that the Italian Center will be running a Bocce tournament again in the summer.

OLD BUSINESS: Tony Mancarella reminded that a few months ago, one of our members mentioned that we should let some of our members that own businesses hold catering events at the Italian Center, suggesting a decision should be presented. Lou said that the Board agreed that if a member rents the Italian Center, then they must use one of our members that own businesses for the food. Lou mentioned that there are three options: Open bar, Modified cash bar, Cash bar. Lou also mentioned that food must be brought in and the kitchen is not to be used. Jeanine said that the specifics for renting the Italian Center should be on the website.

NEW BUSINESS: Lou said that Vince is looking for volunteers to help moved to stage pieces to the Italian Center for the dinner dance. Tony said that he is going to need a chair or co-chair for the Progressive Ball this year.



We Honored Paul Mancarella

A lit candle was placed at his usual spot at the Mancarella meeting night table, and later a moment of silence. Tony and Jack Mancarella thanked the Center members for a beautiful service they gave Paul at his Wake on the 7th. Tony and Jack also brought the meeting night's desert and led a moment of silence.



You Asked for Activities – We Got Them - Now Please Support Them – Have Tons of Fun

2026

14 FEB 2026 VALENTINE'S DINNER DANCE

ANOTHER SUCCESS THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF FRANCO GIANGRASSO AND HIS TEAM!

2026 SPRING DINNER DANCE FRIDAY, MAY 1ST See [Entertainment Below for Details](#)

ANOTHER SUCCESS THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF MO RICCI AND HIS TEAM!

PLANNED 2026 TRIP TO SARATOGA SUNDAY, AUGUST 9TH ALWAYS A MAGNIFICENT EVENT!

WORKING ON A COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND EVENT IN OCTOBER

2025

August 4th Anthony Comunale Memorial Golf Tournament to benefit the Dr. Bacile Scholarship Fund

A ROUSING SUCCESS – SEE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

August 17th Saratoga Bus Trip

A ROUSING SUCCESS THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF RAY PANTALEO AND HIS TEAM

September 12th Italian Center Dinner Dance

ANOTHER ROUSING SUCCESS THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF MO RICCI, RAY PANTALEO, AND HIS TEAM

September 21st Bocce Tournament/Summer

ANOTHER SUCCESS THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF PEOPLE LIKE RAY PANTALEO AND TOM VIANI

BOCCE TOURNAMENT PRIZES AWARDED TO ANTHONY FEO & ANDY KUTCHMA

Italian Center Progressive Ball October 25, 2025

SUPER SENIOR CELEBRATION, ANOTHER SUCCESS

14 Dec 2025 Members Only Christmas Luncheon

GOOD TIME/FOOD WHEN OLD/NEW MEMBERS MINGLE – TOYS FOR TOTS AND “100 CLUB” DRAWING

ANOTHER SUCCESS THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF PEOPLE LIKE TOM VIANI, JACK CASTELLI, AND OTHERS

Secretary's Report

Members and Friends of the Italian Center... If you need any information and/or have questions about the content of the newsletter or communications, please contact our Secretary:

Paul Waldbillig at (845) 242-0004 or secretary@theitaliancenter.com.

Also, if you have interesting entries for the Newsletter, please send them to newsletter@theitaliancenter.com. (Note the dates for submission below and submit them earlier than later).

Any questions and/or issues regarding the technical aspects of newsletter, website, social media or if you need your credentials for the private [Membership](#) section, please send an email to support@theitaliancenter.com.

Also, new [Membership Application](#) is currently available, so please pass it on to anyone whom you think might want to join and enjoy our club and make it even grander.

Would you like to share comments and/or suggestions directly with the Board of Trustees? If so, please send an email to the Chairman of the Board at: board@theitaliancenter.com.

Updated Newsletter Schedule		
<u>Submit Content Before</u>	<u>Publish By</u>	<u>Meeting Night</u>
Tuesday, May 19, 2026	Tuesday, May 26, 2026	Tuesday, June 2, 2026
Tuesday, June 23, 2026	Tuesday, June 30, 2026	Tuesday, July 7, 2026
Tuesday, July 21, 2026	Tuesday, July 28, 2026	Tuesday, August 4, 2026
Tuesday, August 18, 2026	Tuesday, August 25, 2026	Tuesday, September 1, 2026
Tuesday, September 22, 2026	Tuesday, September 29, 2026	Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Tuesday, October 20, 2026	Tuesday, October 27, 2026	Tuesday, November 3, 2026
Tuesday, November 17, 2026	Tuesday, November 24, 2026	Tuesday, December 1, 2026

PLEASE HELP/ENCOURAGE MEMBERS TO RECEIVE/READ NEWSLETTERS

([HTTP://WWW.THEITALIANCENTER.COM/MEMBERSHIP](http://www.theitaliancenter.com/membership))

PLEASE HELP US MAKE THE NEWSLETTER EVEN BETTER

They are in a permanent “corporate” data store open to us and the public because:

- They have publicity utility and help us fulfill our Corporate Charter to Promote our Culture/Heritage.
- They provide a historical record of our activity (a Monthly “Intentions/Commitments/Progress Report”).
- They provide space to honor Members, Our families, Italians/Things Italian, and our Achievements as a Club.

**IT IS A TEAM EFFORT! MAKE OUR NEWSLETTERS EVEN BETTER! CONTRIBUTE MATERIAL, SUGGESTIONS, CRITIQUE, ETC.
READ IT! ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO READ IT!**

Please ask your fellow members if they “get/read the Newsletter?” If they lack it, help them get it online/hard copy! If they do get it but do not read it, please tell them about the value of reading it if you are so inclined.

If you are not so inclined, or have comments, complaints, suggestions, contributions, please let us know: secretary@theitaliancenter.com or president@theitaliancenter.com

DITTO FOR OUR CLUB! IT IS A TEAM EFFORT! HELP MAKE OUR CLUB EVEN BETTER!

If every member made some effort that uniquely enhanced the club even by 1%, it'd be 3 times as good as it is now! Too busy? We get it! We live in the fast lane. But think about it, something might fit into your lifestyle:

- Attend meeting(s) and contribute to discussions e.g., project(s) ideas and/or efforts
- Attend open function(s), bring guests >> 1%
- Help with function(s); Help with “maintenance” >> 1%
- Support Raffles and Fund Raisers >> 1%
- Bring in new active Members >> 1%
- Ogni cosa fa brodo! Everything, big or little, helps! Collectively >> 200% Improvement

Entertainment Committee

Chair: Ray Pantaleo, rayp520@aol.com, 914-456-4761

Attendees at our events, including Provincial Nights, are **mostly nonmembers**.

We emphasize that we, with earnest effort, are trying to provide events that **benefit and please the Membership**.
More Member participation and support welcomed! Your ideas, your wants, and needs, welcomed!



**EVEN THE MIGHTY LION NEEDS A PRIDE/UN BRANCO TO SURVIVE!
RAY CANNOT DO IT ALONE, NOR CAN LOU, NOR CAN ANYBODY!
THIS IS YOUR CLUB - MAKE GOOD THINGS HAPPEN!
JOIN THE PRIDE!
WANTED: IDEAS AND IMPLEMENTORS!
HAVE AN IDEA - SHARE IT.
HAVE PRIDE - MAKE IT HAPPEN!**



We Want Your Input for 2026 Events! Help with Ideas and Support!

Serious Ideas Will Be Explored - Commit Your Support and We Will Make Things Happen

Contact Ray Pantaleo 914-456-4761 RAYP520@AOL.COM

**2026 SPRING DINNER DANCE - WE SAID GOOD-BYE TO WINTER AND HELLO TO SPRING
FRIDAY, MAY 1ST, AT THE ITALIAN CENTER**

ANOTHER SUCCESS THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF MO RICCI AND HIS TEAM!

Wow What a Dinner - Wow What a Band - Wow What Fun



PLANNED 2026 TRIP TO SARATOGA SUNDAY, AUGUST 9TH ALWAYS A GREAT EVENT!

WORKING ON A COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND EVENT IN OCTOBER

Marketing/Advertising Committee Report

Objectives of the Committee

*Increase Club Membership, General Member Participation, and the Club's Presence in our community!
Increase Attendance and Support for Our Activities, Events, Fundraising*

Possible Strategies for Achieving these Objectives

Increase Club Presence on Social Media and in Local "News" Media

Update the Website and Newsletter, and Increase Their Penetration into the Community

Interested in bringing the Club back into the light? Contact the Secretary! Join the Committee!

On Friday, September 26th, our new and improved website went live! Have you visited www.theitaliancenter.com to check out our fresh look along with a new online calendar of events? Have you visited the updated Member Only Portal!

For all the latest Italian Center news, be sure to like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram @TheItalianCenterNY.

Again, interested in bringing the Club back into the light?

Get material to put on our social media!

Have Material to Put In our public media then contact the Secretary!

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram.

LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Do Your Part to Keep Our Social Media Living and Breathing!

Website | Facebook | Instagram

Have something to put in those or feel something is missing?

*Send material or thoughts to the **President** or **Secretary***

president@theitaliancenter.com | secretary@theitaliancenter.com

And Don't Forget to Like Us on Facebook!

A SPECIAL REMINDER TO OUR MEMBERS

Every month we publish our Club Newsletter. It intends to convey timely Club business and information, but also to broaden members' knowledge of our culture, Club history, its members, and its grand times. It gives Officers/Committees a space to convey general plans, aspirations, and needs.

Its “Member Newsletter Submissions Section” allows Members to share reminisces about the Club, relevant people, and to share knowledge of relevant language and culture.

Its “Wellness Section” allows Members to share fond memories of deceased members.

We encourage Members to submit such for publication!

Some words, perhaps, with photos, would be grand!

It does not have to be “pretty”; you can leave the formatting and wordsmithing to us!


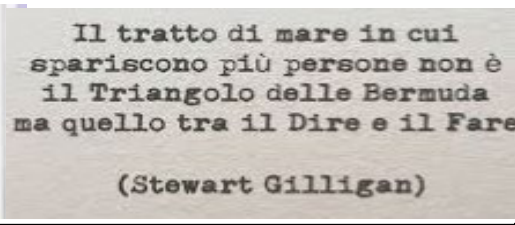
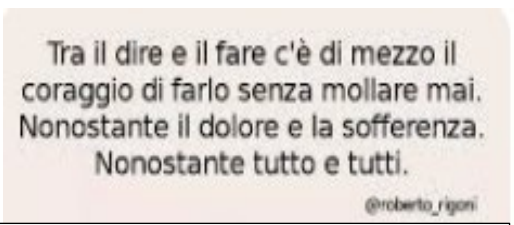
All your entries for the newsletter can be sent to: newsletter@theitaliancenter.com.

The Italian Center has a heart and soul! It is its members!

It exists because of them! Nothing gets done without them! If it is good, it is because of them!

It is not easy! Manna does not fall from the skies. Luckily, we have had, and have, a good “heart and soul”!

Remember this Italian Lesson nestled in a Pep Talk

		
<p>Between saying and doing is an ocean! The voyage often arduous. It ain't easy doing good things!</p>	<p>Many well-intentioned people get lost in that Ocean. They never make it to the shore they seek.</p>	<p>Those that do make it do because they had the courage and fortitude to work at it despite the rough waters!</p>

Do your part! It takes a village! And Remember

Siciliano	A Bon Vascasceddu Nun Manca Timuni.
Italiano	Un Buon Vascello Non Manca il Timone.
English Literal	A Good Ship Has a [Good] Rudder.
Meaning	Every Good Enterprise/Family Needs Good Leaders [& Members]
Editor's Message	[Every Good Club Needs Good Leaders AND Good Active Members!]



Dr. Victor A. Bacile Scholarship Award Program

Including 2025 winners, 131 scholarships valued at more than \$279K have been awarded. Board voted in Dec 2025 to increase the scholarship amount from \$3,000 to \$4,000 for 2026. This program is **only** open to Italian Center members in good standing, their spouses, and their children. *(Applicants must submit Applications by End of September)*

Not all applicants receive a scholarship, but the odds are good, and it is a significant IC Membership perk.

For general information, access this link: <http://www.theitaliancenter.com/scholarship>.

If you would like to volunteer or have specific questions, please email scholarship@theitaliancenter.com or call **Joe Pantaleo**, (845) 462-4080. Officers: Paul Waldbillig - President, Bob DiLullo - Treasurer, Joe Pantaleo - Secretary. Representing the Italian Center on the Board are Bob Civitano, George Harnen, Jeff Waldbillig, Al Cappelli, Bob DiLullo, Joe Pantaleo, Lou Piro, Mo Ricci, Paul Waldbillig, and Dr. Larry Zolnik

2025 Bacile Scholarships Awards Presentation January 3rd, 2026

Other Scholarship and Educational Opportunities

Our Dr. Bacile Scholarship Program is a perk for Italian Center members' children and spouses.

Here are few scholarship opportunities available to those of Italian descent:

Columbus Citizens Foundation: <https://columbuscitizens.org/scholarships/scholarship-applications/> (and others)

National Italian American Foundation: <https://www.niaf.org/programs/scholarships/>

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS:

EMILY CIVITANO (ROBERT CIVITANO)

GABRIELLA ROSE RADO (JEANINE AGNOLET-RADO)

BRIANNA GIANGRASSO (PIERO GIANGRASSO)

Representing IC
Vincent Corona

Representing IC
Paul Waldbillig



THOSE INCREDIBLY TALENTED STUDENTS MAKE US PROUD.

National Organization of Italian American Women: <https://www.noiaaw.org/scholarships/>

Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America: <https://www.osdia.org/initiatives/scholarships/>

UNICO Foundation: <https://www.unico.org/scholarships>

STUDY ABROAD U.S. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs: <https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/>

Bocce League

THE BOCCE LEAGUE STARTED ON APRIL 27, 2026

Games Every Monday Evenings Promptly at 6:00PM in the Spring-Summer-Fall
Unless Cancelled/Rescheduled for Weather, Etc.

Even if you do not play, the bar is open,
join your brothers and sisters, watch them play or watch a game at the bar!

Bocce League Chair - Joe Pedota at sarge1912@aol.com

Continue the spirit – Have fun – Carpe Diem!

The entry fee is \$45 per member for the season. Sponsor fees are \$150



Milanese Italian Restaurant
2025 Italian Center Bocce Champions

THE FOUR SPONSORS (TEAMS) FOR BOCCE NIGHT ARE:

GINO'S PIZZA & RESTAURANT (GREEN)

M. RICCI ELECTRIC (RED)

MILANESE ITALIAN RESTAURANT (BLACK)

JD'S PUB & BREW (BLUE)

GINO GEMMATI

MAURIZIO RICCI

SANTINO MILANESE

GINO GEMMATI

[HTTPS://WWW.GINOSPIZZERIAS.COM/](https://www.ginospizzerias.com/)

[HTTPS://WWW.MRICCIELECTRIC.COM/](https://www.mriccielectric.com/)

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MILANESERESTAURANT/](https://www.facebook.com/milaneserestaurant/)

[HTTPS://WWW.JDPUBNBREW.COM/](https://www.jdpubnbrew.com/)

Volunteer Opportunities for Members

Renovation Committee Needs Your Physical/Logistical Help, Expertise, Equipment

If you can help, let Vincent Murray know at (845) 724-3154 | (914) 456-7448, vicepresident2@theitaliancenter.com.

Servers, Kitchen Help, Set Up/Tear Down for Club Events

Volunteers needed especially for our Regular Meeting Nights and Provincial Nights

PLEASE If you can help, let Lou Piro know (845) 629-8905, president@theitaliancenter.com.

WE RELY ON YOURSELVES TO MAKE GOOD THINGS HAPPEN

This Is Our Club, Make Your Mark, Have Some Fun, And Honor Your Heritage!

We are truly blessed to have members with skills, resources, and devotion that generously help us do things we could not do without their support. Whether it is rebuilding our staircase, fixing the plumbing, serving a great meal on Provincial Night, running a committee, being a Board Member, or whatever, we'd be lost without our Members' Support!

BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER! IT IS FUN. IT HAS REWARDS, IT IS NECESSARY!

If you would like to help with our facilities, please contact our 2nd Vice President, Vincent Murray at (845) 724-3154 | (914) 456-7448, vicepresident2@theitaliancenter.com.

Here Is the Current List of Things We Need Help to Do!

Note: Not A Complete List – **We Can Always Find Ways to Use Your Talents!**



Finished Club Tasks

- Assist hanging privacy panels in men's room
- Bollards to prevent people from parking on grass
- Clean out rear gutter and other gutters
- Electrical work for fire alarm inspection
- Fill in depression over septic tank
- Finish painting the building
- Hang TV in Bar and connect to cable
- Mount AED box in the lobby
- Power wash kitchen carts
- Repair Gutter
- Repair pipe for septic
- Replace sink washers in multiple sinks
- Clean out rear gutter
- Fill ditch by mailbox
- Prune trees around the property
- Put up PVC strip in bathroom
- Replace batteries for emergency exits
- Replace sink washers in multiple sinks

Indoor Club Tasks

- Clean & Paint Kitchen floor and walls
- Clean and repair some of the dining room chairs
- Fill in gaps around the front door
- Floor mats in dish room
- Grab bars in bathroom stalls
- Organize and possibly improve attic flooring
- Paint Bar door and molding
- Paint molding around front door
- Repair bathroom sheet rock
- Repair chairs
- Replace outlet by men room door in foyer
- Help re-assemble the bocce/utility shed

Outdoor Club Tasks

- Clean out the storage unit to eliminate monthly cost
- Clean up and out the trailer we have at Bottini's
- Fill in channels around stairs and seed
- Hide heat tape wires in soffit
- Mount No Parking signs in front of the building
- Mount One way traffic signs in front of building
- Paint Handicap ramp
- Repair sidewalk



Membership Committee Report

Please take a moment to update your member information... If you have had some changes or simply would like to update your information with us, please send us an email at membership@theitaliancenter.com.

If you are interested in helping the Membership Committee or have ideas on how to attract and sustain good members, please contact **Al Tripoli** (application management) at membership@theitaliancenter.com or advertising@theitaliancenter.com.

Our Club is special and unique in the area. It has been and should continue to be something special in the lives of its members and the community – get involved – help it grow and thus improve.

**ASK SOMEONE TO JOIN OUR CLUB - BECOME INVOLVED IN COMMITTEES
SHARE OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - VOLUNTEER WHEN YOU SEE MEMBERS NEED HELP**

April 2026's Meeting New Members Initiated:

None

MAKE THE ITALIAN CENTER A FAMILY AFFAIR!

HELP GROW PRODUCTIVE MEMBERSHIP - SPONSOR GOOD APPLICANTS MALE **AND FEMALE
HELP MAKE THIS CLUB EVEN MORE VIBRANT!**

Do you know someone who would like to become a member of our club?

Check out the updated [MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION](#) and pass onto friends and family that might join and enjoy our Club!

**Membership Dues Can Be Paid by Credit Cards or Cash at the Bar, Or Send Your Check To:
The Italian Center, Attn: Ron Knapp FS, 1195 Route 376, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590**

Wellness Committee Report

Sal Polizzotto is the Wellness Chairperson! Members must be his eyes, ears, and representatives. **Report member wellness information to Sal Polizzotto** at (845) 590-7319 or wellness@theitaliancenter.com.

Please volunteer to serve on the Wellness Committee. It serves and honors our members by helping them and their families in times of need. When members are in the hospital, ill, convalescing, or have passed, please let Sal or the president know of such instances and/or of the status. The Committee and the Board will take it from there and decide/take appropriate action.

General - Sick at Home or Hospitalized, Convalescing at Home or in Rehab

Jack Castelli received a permanent pacemaker and attended April Meeting Night but left early

Al Tripoli also received a pacemaker and is recovering.

Frank LaManna was dealing with some health issues and was in the hospital but is on the mend.

Residing at Assisted Living Facilities

Bob Spinello (100 years old; oldest member) is in Lutheran care

Deceased Members (Within Recent Membership Cycle)



3/27/2026

Paul Sebastian Mancarella - 71

11/29/2025

Mario Bertolozzi - 95

1/13/2026

Giulio Di Giacomo - 92

11/5/2025

John M. Angiulli - 80

1/9/2026

Marquis G. "Marc" VanDeWater - 83

11/4/2025

John Bordi Jr. - 91

9/26/2025

Leonard Spinelli - 88

8/10/2025

Carlo Marinaro - 66

Member Newsletter Submissions



Use this section to share fond memories of the Club/its members, or knowledge/experiences regarding Italian or Italian American history, culture, and/or language.

CONTRIBUTE! You can leave formatting/wordsmithing to us!

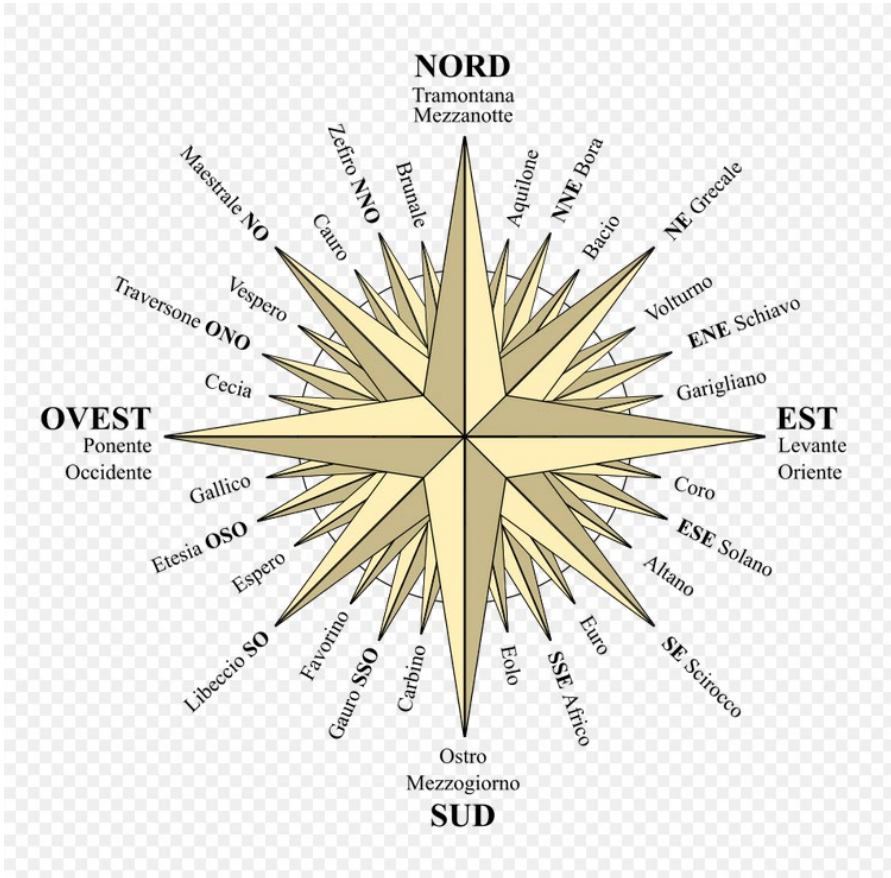
Send your entries to secretary@theitaliancenter.com or president@theitaliancenter.com!
This edition I'll explore something that is near and dear to Italy, "La rosa dei venti"

[La rosa dei venti – The rose of the winds – The Ancient Mediterranean compass](#)

Ancient Homer, 400 BC, in Book V of the Odyssey, lists the four main winds: Boreas, Euro, Noto and Zephyr and sort of ordered them around a "compass symbol". Centuries later, Homer's depiction idea took root in 14th Century Middle Ages when Maritime Republics were coming into their glory. Starting in the Republic of Amalfi, the "wind rose" as we know it today, the symbol to the left, started to take shape.

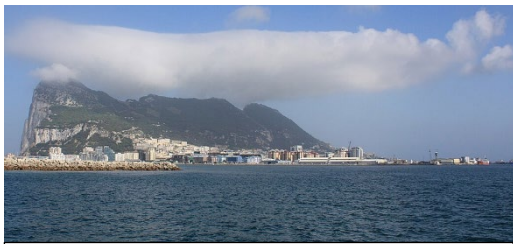
This "rose" was based on an occult symbol for a rose and other sacred geometric symbols of that ilk. The oldest surviving representation of this "wind rose" appears in the Catalan Atlas of about 1375; this Atlas is preserved in the National Library of France.

Different maritime powers created and positioned their "wind rose" to coincide with their maritime routes. For instance, Venice, the dominant maritime republic in the eastern Mediterranean around 1400, positioned their "wind rose" on the Greek island of Zakynthos. Their "**Tramontana**" (the wind that comes from beyond the mountains, in Latin Ultramontes) comes from the mountains of neighboring Albania. Positioning the "rose" for instance in Sicily, that "Tramontana" would blow from southern France down through the Rhône Valley to the Mediterranean Sea, particularly during winter and spring.



Sometimes this strong, cold, dry, northerly wind is called a **Mistral**. Why? Because this wind coincided with the "Mistral", the main road that led to Venice! A Mistral often lasts several days and can reach speeds over 80 mph (130 km/h), causing damage to crops, but it clears the air to provide intense sunlight too.

The Venetian position of the rose also explains the origin of the name **Scirocco**, a hot wind, often dusty or rainy, blowing from Syria or similarly, **Libeccio**, wind from Libya, which is located south-west of Zakynthos. Either would be hot wind, often dusty or rainy, blowing from the deserts of the Middle East or North Africa across the Mediterranean to southern Europe.



Levante cloud hanging over the Rock of Gibraltar.

Across the Mediterranean and obviously in Italy today, "[La rosa dei venti](#)" – [the compass rose – the wind rose](#), is uniquely calibrated to a Mediterranean region but its terminology is universally used and understood. In conversation in piazza, and on the Italy's TV/Radio, you'll hear its terminology; it helps to understand it a bit. For example, a "**Levante Oriente**" is always directionally an easterly wind derived from some western inland source that travels a significant distance across the Mediterranean seas. It is a wind that kicks up the sea, and it is generally cool and moist, that can bring fog and rain, often between July and October. Eastern France and Spain have their "**Levante Oriente**" occurrences, and so does Eastern Italy, just from different origins.

A Bonus Sicilian Early 1900s Immigrant Tidbit – the Man Who Tickled Families Like Mine and the Giangrosso – See Link

Before [Totò \(Antonio de Curtis\)](#) there was **Sicilian Nofrio (Giovanni De Rosalia) Sicilian Comic Actor, Playwright, Poet**

BEFORE WE CLOSE THIS NEWSLETTER - LET'S VISIT AND REFLECT ON OUR HISTORY



What was happening around May 2012? Well, our esteemed Joe Pantaleo was President, and we hosted a fundraiser for an ill person in a member's family. Through much cooperation with the family and friends of the person, their volunteers, and our staff we were able to provide much needed assistance and a warm reception for this wonderful deserving person. Joe said: "What a pleasure to be able to supply this aid. As I looked around the many, many people who attended, I saw many Center members. What a great feeling of famiglia – one of the many reasons I treasure being a member of Casa Italiana. I also want to thank my many staff people for the great success we are having this year with catering parties and weekly dinner offerings:



Tony Comunale, Ben Paganelli and Larry Le Vine are doing a superior job with catering, special dinners and music nights; Dom Letterii with monitoring our costs; Dom and Joe Fiacco with member events; Joe Maio, Lou Piro, Kevin Martin and Lou Foscadi with Thursday dinners and many different volunteers for our many other activities. THANKS."



And we just held a wonderful event, Our Annual Wine Pairing Dinner, chaired by our very own wine connoisseur Joe Fiacco. Our paid staff and volunteers joined forces to deliver probably one of the finest dining experiences held at the Italian Center around that time. ... Without



everyone's help and professional know-how we never could have staged such a fantastic event! The Ladies Auxiliary helped and participated, and it almost seemed like it was a great "girls' night out" event, something Carol Cecchini, Hennie Buglino, Bobbie Fitzgerald, and Dolly Rinaudo attested to!

And in the spirit of our current Mo Ricci, Vince Murray, and other professional handymen who generously help us, there was this: Bobby Taylor (a plumber) was enjoying lunch at the Club, celebrating his birthday with his family on a quiet Saturday afternoon when he caught a "whiff" of an ugly smell in the air. The wait staff and some of the volunteers working at the time said that the odor had been lingering in the area most of the morning and they didn't know what to do about it. More importantly, there was a party booked for the evening. Bobby excused himself and went down to the basement where he found a 6' clogged drain and a broken vent. After lunch, he returned to the Center in work clothes and with tools in hand proceeded to repair the broken drain, fix the rotted-out vent, clean out the blocked trap and fanout the ugly odor. Bobby would not accept payment for his professional plumbing work. Without his help, the Center would have had some unhappy paying guests!

Editor's Note – Moral of the Story

These acts of exceptional volunteerism should not go unnoticed!

While the Italian Center should not expect a free ride always, and no one wants the Center to take cavalier advantage of anyone let alone a brother or sister, it is voluntarism that makes a Club a Club.

This is a fact: The Center is your Center. As a member you literally own the Center, in the sense of being a stockholder!

Big or small – your support helps the Club survive – and in a way helps you better appreciate the Club.

Do what you can when you can! [See Vince's Volunteer To-do List](#)

Contact List

[\(Return Top\)](#)

Casa Italiana of Dutchess County dba “The Italian Center”
1195 Route 376, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 USA
Phone (845) 454-1492 (Leave Message)

[Facebook](#) | [Website](#) | [Membership](#)

For General Concerns and Comments: president@theitaliancenter.com

For Membership Questions and Concerns: membership@theitaliancenter.com

For Technical and/or Web Support: support@theitaliancenter.com



Board of Directors	Email
Chairman - Ray Pantaleo (Elected 2025)	board@theitaliancenter.com
President - Lou Piro	president@theitaliancenter.com
1st Vice President - Franco Giangrasso	vicepresident1@theitaliancenter.com
2nd Vice President - Vincent Murray	vicepresident2@theitaliancenter.com
Treasurer - Tom DiGiovanni	
Secretary - Paul Waldbillig	secretary@theitaliancenter.com
Director - Jack Castelli	jjcastelli@aol.com
Director - Mark Palazzolo	map5662@yahoo.com
Director - Tom Viani	tlviani@aol.com
Committee Chairs	
Financial Secretary - Ron Knapp	financialsecretary@theitaliancenter.com
Membership - Al Tripoli	membership@theitaliancenter.com
Marketing/Advertising - Tom Martinelli, Chair	advertising@theitaliancenter.com
Newsletter/Website - Tony Daniele	newsletter@theitaliancenter.com
Planning - Tony Mancarella	planning@theitaliancenter.com
Wellness - Sal Polizzotto	wellness@theitaliancenter.com
Scholarship - Paul Waldbillig	scholarship@theitaliancenter.com
Building & Grounds - Vincent Murray	vicepresident2@theitaliancenter.com
Entertainment - Ray Pantaleo	rayp520@aol.com
League/Activity Chairs	
Golf League - Mark Webber	golfleague@theitaliancenter.com
Bocce League - Joe Pedota	 bocce@theitaliancenter.com
Card Night - Phil Sciuto	pshoetoe@hotmail.com
Scholarship Golf Tournament - Paul Waldbillig	scholarshipgolf@theitaliancenter.com