



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](#)

AUGUST 2026 NEWSLETTER

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

The Bacile Golf Tournament was postponed to 8/17 because of inclement weather on 8/3! [See Tournament Website.](#)

DINNER RESERVATIONS REQUIRED! Contact Ernie Bruno 845-594-5700 (hpsinger@optonline.net) by the Sunday before the dinners.

[Website, Facebook, and Instagram](#) input! Send to president@theitaliancenter.com and/or secretary@theitaliancenter.com!

Members' Meeting – Tuesday, August 4th, 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 and Tom Viani

Antipasto:	Pomodori, Carote Tagliuzzate, Cetriolo e Olive - Salad with Tomatoes, Shredded Carrots, Cucumber, Olives
Primo:	Rigatoni in un Ragu e Rigatoni in a Ragu - Linguine con Aglio e Olio Linguini with Garlic and Oil
Secondo:	Salsiccia italiana, polpetta, e una verdura - Italian Sausage, Homemade Italian Meatballs, and Vegetable
Dolce:	Scelta dello chef - Chef's choice and Coffee

Provincial Night - Tuesday, August 18th, 2026

Honoring Regione Marche and Provincia di Peraro e Urbino. Cash Bar 6:00PM - Dinner 7:00PM

Hosted by the IC Board – **THE BOARD WILL PERFORM THEY ALWAYS HAVE!**

Don't miss it! It will be una serata **surprisingly good!** 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 – Still in Flux BUT Be Assured of This

Antipasto:	Mouth watering
Primo:	Better than your mamma's
Secondo:	Unbelievable
Dolce:	Like you went to heaven

Tom Viani's July 21st Lombardia/Bergamo Provincial Night Was Outstanding!

Tom, representing the BoD, put on a feast that was epicurean! Bravi – bravi – bravi to Billy, Tom, Lou, Staff, Helpers!!

			
Br. Tom is worth his weight in gold!	Lou had to be on his toes with these ladies watching!	Go to any table and ask, “What do you think of the meal?” and you’d have heard “OMG! I’ve died and went to heaven!”	The staff and helpers are the unsung heroes of these events! Thank heaven for them!

THIS AUGUST WE'LL CELEBRATE THE REGIONE MARCHE PROVINCIA DI PESARO E URBINO



Marche has a very interesting history and **today it has a unique vibe and cuisine**. You can read about it [in this link](#).

Here let's honor its Provincia di "Pesaro e Urbino" by highlighting three very influential people from Pesaro e Urbino, people that helped shape our art and philosophy.

Renaissance era artist and architect Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino (**Raphael**), who is in the league of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo; **Gioachino Rossini**, groundbreaking 19th Century composer; **Maria Montessori** 20th Century Italian physician and educator best known for her philosophy of education.



[Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino \(Raphael\) famous Renaissance painter and architect](#)

Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino (Raphael), 1483 – 1520, was born in the small but artistically significant central Italian city of Urbino in Marche. His father Giovanni Santi was court painter to Duke Federico da Montefeltro, a well-connected "employer". The duke was a highly successful condottiere (leader of mercenary troops employed by Pope Sixtus IV). The Pope, so pleased by Federico, created the dukedom of Urbino in the kingdom of the Papal States making Federico its Duke. Though the emphasis of Federico's court was more literary than artistic, Raphael's father was a poet as well as a painter, and he gained favor with the powers that be by authoring a flattering rhymed chronicle of the life of Duke Federico. In the very small court of Urbino Raphael's father was probably more integrated into the central circle of the ruling family than most court painters. All this to say, though young Raphael had enormous talent the young Raphael had a leg up because of his father's patrons. Raphael was influenced by Florentine art; but he developed his own style on top of it. Again, he is in league with da Vinci and Michelangelo; One "small" striking example of his talent is this early work: [Madonna of the Pinks](#), now in the National Gallery London.



[Gioachino Antonio Rossini famous composer born in Pesaro then part of the Papal States.](#)

Gioachino Antonio Rossini (1792 –1868) was an Italian composer and conductor of the late Classical and early Romantic eras. While he gained most of his fame for his 39 operas, he also wrote many pieces of chamber music, piano, and some sacred music. He set new standards for both comic and serious opera before retiring from large-scale composition while still in his thirties, at the height of his popularity. His [opera William Tell](#) (French: Guillaume Tell; Italian: Guglielmo Tell) based on Friedrich Schiller's play Wilhelm Tell, which, in turn, drew on the William Tell legend, is an absolute musical, historical, and romance masterpiece. The opera was Rossini's last, although he lived for nearly 40 more years. Fabio Luisi said that Rossini planned for Guillaume Tell to be his last opera even as he composed it. [The often-performed overture](#) in four sections features a depiction of a storm and a vivacious finale. I was a TV Lone Ranger fan – if you were too, you will recognize this, about 6 minutes in. There are so much important history, drama, and musicality in this opera the finale, as good as it is, it is a "only" a miniscule gem in it. I close with another Rossini gem you will recognize – [click here](#).



[Maria Montessori one the most renowned educator/physician to come out of Italy](#)

Maria Tecla Artemisia Montessori (1870 – 1952) was an Italian physician and educator best known for her philosophy of education (the Montessori method) and her writing on scientific pedagogy. At an early age, Montessori enrolled in classes at an all-boys technical school, with hopes of becoming an engineer. She soon had a change of heart and began medical school at the Sapienza University of Rome, becoming one of the first women to attend medical school in Italy; she graduated with honors in 1896. Her educational method is in use globally in many public and private schools. The Montessori approach is a child-centered educational method created by Dr. Maria Montessori in the early 1900s. It emphasizes self-directed activity, hands-on learning, and collaborative play. Rather than traditional rigid instruction, adults act as guides to help children develop independence and natural curiosity. Core Principle: Learning is guided by each child's unique interests, developmental pace, and readiness rather than a fixed group curriculum. [This video](#) offers a helpful visual walkthrough of the core components of the Montessori method.

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

Provincial Night August 18th, 2026. Honoring Marche/Pesaro e Urbino - Hosted by IC Board

Region	Date	Province	Sponsor(s)	Region	Date	Province	Sponsor(s)
Calabria	20-Jan-26	Catanzaro	Pat Fasolino	Lombardia	21-Jul-26	Bergamo	TBD
Toscana	17-Feb-26	Firenze	Tom Viani	Marche	18-Aug-26	P e U	BoD
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
Emilia-Romagna	16-Jun-26	Reggio Emilia	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	Puglia 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!



President's Letter

Fellow Brothers and Sisters,

Yay!! The temperate summer temperatures have returned and it's been beautiful! So cool at night we have been sleeping with only the window open. Great weather for playing golf, if only my game matched the temperate temperatures!

The July Meeting dinner was prepared by Chef Billy assisted by Sous Chef Tom Viani, Jeff Williams, John Troisi, and Sal Letterii. We had the usual salad and red/white pasta, but the entrée was Chicken Francese, a real treat! A cannoli desert finished off the meal. July Provincial Night was hosted by Board with Tom Viani taking the lead on behalf of the Board. The menu was a collaboration between Tom and Chef Billy, with Carmine Mastrangelo, John Casulli and Sal Polizzotto helping. They created a fabulous menu! The meal began with Arugula with mini mozzarella balls, roasted red peppers, olive medley, sliced ham, artichoke hearts, vinaigrette, with garlic bread on the side. The pasta course was a red sauce with shrimp, mussels, clams, and calamari served over linguine. The white was Fettuccini Alfredo. The entrée was thinly sliced pork cutlets in a savory brown Marsala sauce covered with provolone, mushrooms and spinach served with Garlic mashed potatoes. Delicious cannoli cake topped off the meal! It was fantastic! No exaggeration!

Of course, the other "back of the house" staff set up the dining room, took reservations and sold raffles. 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. Volunteers are essential to our dinner success and these folks come through for us every month. Don't be shy, volunteer and pitch in. It's not as daunting as you think!

If you are interested in getting tickets for the Saratoga bus trip you should get them as soon as possible! There are only a few left! Remember you will receive: Round trip bus ride on a luxury bus, admission, covered picnic area that is 30 feet from betting windows, track program and a delicious dinner at Delmonico's Italian Steakhouse on the way back. Bring lunch, some snacks and your favorite beverages and make some bets! Act fast so you don't miss out!

The bar is open on Monday during the bocce league. Come on out, have a drink and enjoy watching the competition or just hang out inside in air-conditioned comfort and watch a sporting event on the TV. Several members came out and had a great time!

Reserve these dates: The **Fall Dinner Dance September 12th!** Always a great time; get tickets early as attendance is limited. **Bocce Tournament and Picnic September 27th** (Joe Pedota), have a great time playing bocce, and enjoy a delicious barbeque lunch. Flyers and details will be coming out shortly.

Please keep our sick and ailing members in your prayers. Call or email me with any comments, questions or concerns 845-629-8905 – president@theitaliancenter.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.
- [Aug 9 Saratoga Racetrack](#) Ray Pantaleo, rayp520@aol.com, \$140pp, Includes Bus, Tented Picnic Area, Entrance/Program, Dinner @ Delmonicos
- [Anthony Comunale Memorial Golf Tournament](#) Monday, August 3, 2026 go to <https://charitygolftoday.com/event?e=28131&ce=c63e98>
- Ray Pantaleo is planning a comedy show for October 10th.
- Ernie Bruno is going to do a big raffle right before the Christmas holidays.
- 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).

MEETING NIGHT HELPERS NEEDED - PLEASE VOLUNTEER

We need members to volunteer to set up, to help in kitchen/serving, to sell raffle tickets, and/or to clean up!
If you can assist with **tickets sales and setup** text or call: Lou Piro at 845-629-8905 or email at: lgpiro@hotmail.com
If you can assist with **kitchen and cleanup** text or call: Tom Viani at 914-475-6374 or email at: tlviani@aol.com

50/50 SUMMER RAFFLE
Only 100 Tickets Sold
GRAND PRIZE \$3,000.00
SECOND PRIZE \$1,500.00
THIRD PRIZE \$500.00
Drawing to be held October 6, 2026
Cost per ticket \$100.00

Drawing 6 Oct @ Mtg Nite!

>>>>> THE SUMMER 50/50 RAFFLE IS NOW LIVE! <<<<<
YOUR SUPPORT FOR SUCH RAFFLES HELPS MAINTAIN/IMPROVE YOUR CLUB!
EACH TICKET COSTS \$100 AND ONLY 100 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD!
THIS RAFFLE WILL SELL OUT QUICKLY! GET YOUR TICKET NOW!
TEXT OR CALL ERNIE BRUNO AT 845-594-5700 (AFTER 11:00AM)
OR EMAIL ERNIE AT: [HPSINGER@OPTONLINE.NET](mailto:hpsinger@optonline.net)
AGAIN! THIS RAFFLE WILL SELL OUT! CONTACT ERNIE BRUNO SOON!

Special Business - Meeting Minutes Report (July 2026)



President (Lou Piro): None

Chairperson of the Board (Ray Pantaleo): None

1st Vice President's Report (Franco Giangrasso): Franco reminded everyone that the bar is open on Monday Evenings.

2nd Vice President's Report: [Volunteers Needed [Please See List Below.](#)] (Vince Murray) None

Treasurer's Report (Tom DiGiovanni) and Financial Secretary (Ron Knapp): Still in the Black.

Membership (Ron Knapp/Paul Waldbillig) Initiated: None **Balloted and Approved:** James Massetti (*Ray Pantaleo*) **Read:** Mike Siracusa (*Al Tripoli*) Geraldine Brucale (*Tina Ruggiero*)

Marketing/Advertising (TBD): [Editor: also see [Marketing Committee Report](#)]: Position Vacant Please Volunteer.

Wellness (Sal Polizzotto): Moe Runza had open heart surgery. His heart is doing well, but he has a stomach issue (colitis). Expects to get discharged in the next few days.

Victor Bacile Scholarship (Paul Waldbillig): Paul said that the golf tournament is Monday, 8/3 (Editor: The Bacile Golf Tournament has been postponed to 8/17 because of inclement weather!) The committee welcomes additional volunteers. He also thanked George Harnen, Lois Gaglione, and Moe Ricci for collecting at Meeting Night. [See Bacile Scholarship.](#)

Planning Board (Tony Mancarella): Tony said that the Progressive Ball preparation is starting. The date will be 11/14. He could use some help and advertising.

Entertainment Committee (Ray Pantaleo) August 9th is the Saratoga bus trip; for members and non-members. **We need to fill 15 spots – it is always a fun day and great bargain!** Details: \$140 per person inclusive of private Bus departs 8:30am from the Italian Center, tax and tip, covered area at racetrack, program, and dinner at DelMonico's in Albany on way back (cash bar)! Bring your own lunch and drinks. **September is the fall dinner** dance with a good band, and a **Bocce Tournament.** **October 10th** is the **Comedy Show.** **November** is the **Progressive Ball.** **December** is the **Members Christmas Buffet.**

OLD BUSINESS: Tom Viani stated that lately the kitchen has been getting requests for gluten-free meals and other different requests. Tom said he can accommodate anything, but he needs to know in advance. Franco Giangrasso said that table captains should tell Ernie Bruno ahead of time

NEW BUSINESS: Tony Mancarella said we used to have Christmas parties for our kids, but we don't have enough members that have young kids any longer. He asked if we could host a party for foster kids and other outreach programs that will be sponsored by the members that own restaurants. Andrea McKeivitt said that school guidance counselors know families in need. Ernie Bruno echoed Andrea's thoughts and said it is important to target those that really need it. Jeanine Agnolet-Rado asked if we could hold some food drives.



Tom Viani (representing the Board as Host and Sous-chef) **put on one heck of a fine July 21st Lombardia/Bergamo Provincial Night!** **Uniquely good many said!** We really need to thank Tom and Lou Piro for being so innovative, energetic, and generous in making this Provincial Night shine in the face of many super fine Provincial Nights.

If you haven't been to a monthly Provincial Night recently you are missing out on what is now the signature event of the Italian Center! Out on the street, mention the IC, and you well might hear "I love their PNs!"

Where else can you get a meal like this for \$40 member/\$45 non-member inclusive of tax and tip?!? With a reasonably priced well stocked cash bar at your service, fun raffles, and community good cheer!

Where can you get a uniquely good salad, then a uniquely good zuppa di pesce and a great red meat sauce pasta, and then a melt in mouth entrée, and then a "to die for" desert?

Where else can you get a fun "family style" dinner with good cheer, laughs, and a VERY attentive wait staff? All for one low price!

I'll tell you where! At The Italian Center every month save December, that's where! Menus change but good food and fun do not! Join in!



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.

You Asked for Activities – We Got Them – Status to Date 2026

FEB 14TH, 2026, VALENTINE'S DINNER DANCE

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

MAY 1ST, 2026, SPRING DINNER DANCE

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

JULY 15TH, 2026, IWAGY PRESENTED WINES OF SICILY AND CAMPANIA

SUCCESSFUL FOR IWAGY HOWEVER NO CLUB MEMBERS ATTENDED

FOR THOSE TO COME See [Entertainment Below for Details](#)

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, 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 Report

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!

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

SIGN UP NOW! RAY PANTALEO, RAYP520@AOL.COM

\$140PP, INCLUDES ALL FEES: BUS, TENTED PICNIC AREA, ENTRANCE/PROGRAM, DINNER @ DELMONICOS

IT WILL BE GREAT JUST LIKE LAST YEAR AND EVERY YEAR!



Let's do something special in September Tesoro!

Cara, let's go to the IC Dinner Dance! Always good food and great fun!



ITALIAN CENTER DINNER DANCE MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS: TICKETS \$55.00

1195 RTE. 376, WAPPINGER

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

DINNER SERVED AT 6:30 INCLUDES:

- ITALIAN ANTIPASTO SALAD WITH SELECT MEATS AND CHEESES
- COMBO MINI MEATBALLS WITH ZITI (SERVED FAMILY STYLE)
- CHICKEN FRANCESE WITH BROCCOLI RABE
- BAVARIAN CHOCOLATE CAKE
- COFFEE, TEA, ESPRESSO

DOORS OPEN AT 6:00PM WITH CASH BAR

BAND AND DANCING BEGIN AT 7:00PM

CLASSIC 60'S, 70'S, AND 80'S ROCK

PERFORMED BY:

THE CHAIN GANG

MORE INFO AND TICKETS CALL MOE RICCI 914-804-9153

MORE INFORMATION WILL BE FORTHCOMING ON THESE

- >> SEPTEMBER 27TH 2ND ANNUAL BOCCE TOURNAMENT & BARBEQUE - JOE PEDOTA SARGE1912@AOL.COM
- >> OCTOBER 6 MEETING NIGHT - ERNIE BRUNO'S SUMMER 100 CLUB RAFFLE DRAWING
- >> OCTOBER 10 COMEDY SHOW/DINNER- STILL NEED TO FINALIZE PRICE/MENU
- >> OCTOBER COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND EVENT POTENTIALLY
- >> NOV 14TH PROGRESSIVE BALL TONY MANCARELLA AMCHIRO1987@HOTMAIL.COM DETAILS/VOLUNTEER
- >> DECEMBER ANNUAL MEMBER'S CHRISTMAS BUFFET
- >> WINTER 100 CLUB RAFFLE WITH DRAWING AT MEMBER'S CHRISTMAS BUFFET
- >> JANUARY AT THE CLUB "THE RETURN OF JETS-GIANTS FOOTBALL PARTY" WITH PRIZES, A FUN EVENT HOSTED BY FRANCO GIANGRASSO & RAY PANTALEO

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 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 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 reminiscences 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 Pep Talk nestled in an Italian Lesson



Siciliano: “Biddizza senza grazia è comu l'isca senz'ami.”

Italiano: “Bellezza senza grazia è come l'esca senza ami.”

Inglese/English: Beauty without grace is like bait without hooks.”

Hidden Meaning: “Beauty alone cannot keep good people by your side.”

Meaning in Context: “The Center is beautiful, but only we can give it a beautiful purpose!”

Do your part! It takes a village! We need the structure, but its useful purpose is in us!

Remember:

L'unione fa la forza! – There is strength in numbers and unity!

and

Ogni cosa fa brodo – About anything can make broth – Every little bit helps – Do what you can!

Andiamo a gonfie vele! Let's go [forward] at full sail!

Dr. Victor A. Bacile Scholarship Award Program

The Bacile Golf Tournament has been postponed to 8/17 because of inclement weather!

Click Here to Get to Golf Tournament Website
<https://charitygolftoday.com/event?e=28131&ce=c63e98>

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

VERY IMPORTANT!

Applicants must submit their Applications by End of September!!!!

Click Link Here for Criteria and Application

[Dr. Bacile Scholarship Application \(2026\)](#)

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 Amy Bombardieri, Bob Civitano, Vinny Corona, George Harnen, Jeff Waldbillig, Al Cappelli, Bob DiLullo, Joe Pantaleo, Ray Pantaleo, Lou Piro, Mo Ricci, Paul Waldbillig, and Dr. Larry Zolnik.

Other Scholarship and Educational Opportunities

Our Dr. Bacile Scholarship is a perk for IC members' children and spouses. Here are few other scholarship opportunities:

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

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

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

PLAN TO COME!!

SEPTEMBER 27TH 2ND ANNUAL BOCCE TOURNAMENT & BARBEQUE

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

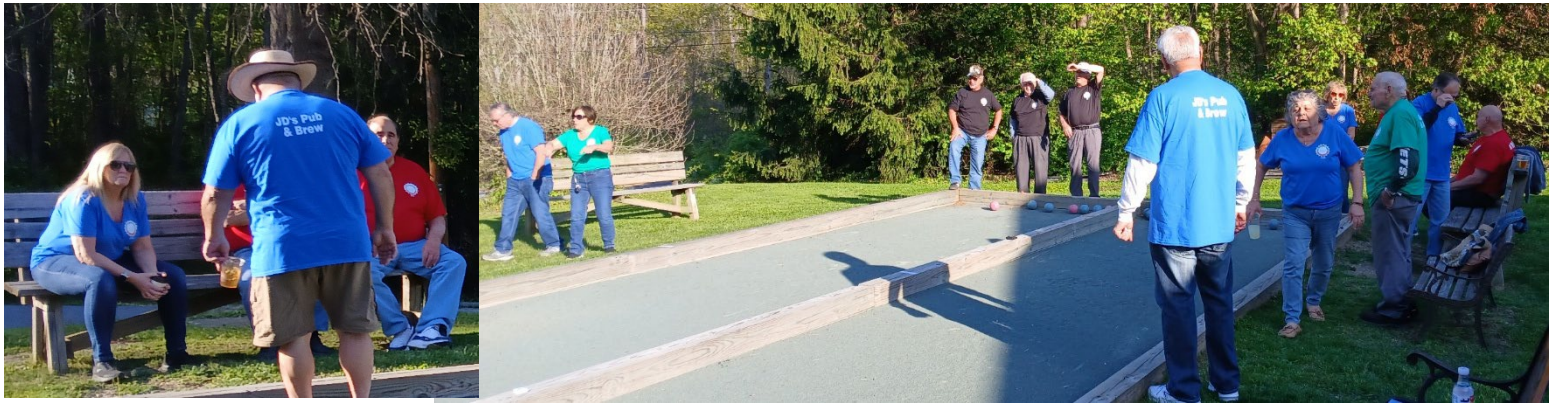
FOR MORE INFO AND TO HELP: JOE PEDOTA SARGE1912@AOL.COM

BOCCE LEAGUE GAMES EVERY MONDAY EVENINGS PROMPTLY AT 6:00

Unless Cancelled/Rescheduled for Weather, Etc.

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

Even if you do not play, the bar is open, join your brothers/sisters, watch them play, cheer them on, socialize! Have fun but remember: NO GAMBLING!



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.mricclectric.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 OURSELVES 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**

July 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

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
1/13/2026	Giulio Di Giacomo - 92
1/9/2026	Marquis G. "Marc" VanDeWater - 83

11/29/2025	Mario Bertolozzi - 95
11/5/2025	John M. Angiulli - 80
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 our Italian/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!

*Herein I present some **dialect Italian American words**! Some may be very tribal, and immigrants comingled their dialects and American. I share what I heard growing up and what these words meant to us kids. This is not an Italian lesson; it is a lesson on how my "tribe" (and others) expressed themselves as Italian Americans.*

Love to hear about your Italian American expressions and experiences!

Eh cumpa, how's the wife treatin you?" "Fa scem? You know I lost my job! Menne! Abbasta!"

In the mid- 1900s in Poughkeepsie you might have heard such an exchange. Young Italian American men, just back from WWII, married and found jobs in Schatz, the railway, or the like. They were trying to better the status of their family, while suffering the ups and downs of life. Sometimes they made unforced errors, then the wife would be on their case; always their "cumpari" were ready, willing, and able to rub some salt on the wound ("stuzzicare un amico")! Breaking down the above example exchange:

"**Eh cumpa!**" means "**Hey close trusted friend**". Some say its English equivalent could be "**Hey pal!**" but that connotation just does not work for me (it may work for AI but not for this **IA-Italian American**)! "**Hey pal**" in America is usually said in a pejorative way, like in "**Hey pal! What the blazes are you doing in my garage!?**" My people would NOT say "**Eh cumpa! What the blazes are you doing in my garage!?**" It would be more like "**Eh cumpa! Ciao! Take whatever you need from the garage!**" My point is, if you are properly calling someone a "**cumpa**" you are indicating the person is a **respected part of your tribe/family and always welcome**.

D'altro canto (on the other hand), if the person in said garage was **not a "cumpa"**, I can "hear" them saying "**Eh fazul! What are you doing in my garage!?**" or "**Eh fa scem! What are you doing in my garage!?**" Where, **Eh fazul (bean)** in context means something like "**hey stupid person of little account**" and in context, **Eh fa scem (makes a fool)** means something like "**hey screwup!**"

Here's how I break down "Eh cumpa, how's the wife treatin you?" (retort) "Fa scem? You know I lost my job! Menne! Abbasta!"

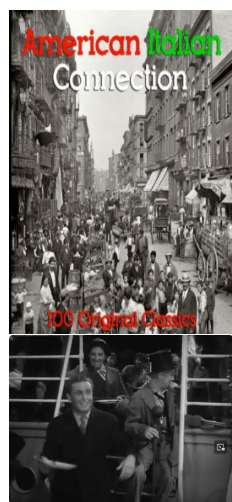
The banter is between close friends, otherwise "**cumpa**" would not be used. The instigator is ribbing his friend that lost his job thus certainly he has an annoyed wife. To me the retort translates to "**Playing the fool? You know I lost my job! Good god lay off!**"

"**Menne**" (min-nigh) connotes exacerbation like "caspita", "mannaggia", or "che cazzo" but milder like "good god/what the blazes!". Menne is breast/teat in Sicilian; my elders' thought "tits!" was less vulgar than those three, thus used "menne", at least with us kids.

"**Abbasta**" (Sicilian) = Basta (Italian) = Enough (English).

While we are at it, let's address "**paesano/paisanu/ fellow countryman**" vs. "**cumpa**". Some may equate the two, but my people would use "**paisanu**" to address a person that shared their regional origin and/or culture but nothing much more. Yes, using "**paisanu**" conveys a little extra respect and acceptance to the person in question but it conveys nothing like calling a person a "**cumpa**" does.

"Eh cumpa, how's that new job goin?" What do you say in reply? Do you say "Menzamenz" or "Cosi' Cosa"?



Well, if I was asked about a job that I was ambivalent about, I would quickly and instinctively say **menzamenz**, which in my IA circles clearly meant "**so-so**" or "**not good but not bad**" or "**not bad but not good**". Admittedly, "**Cosi' Cosa**" or "**Cosi' Cosi**" connotes those, is proper Italian, and is an idiom that is widely used in Italy, but in my mind, it would not pop up to use over "**menzamenz**".

In my small World, "**Cosi' Cosa**" or "**Cosi' Cosi**" was not used. I was quite familiar with it via the [cute little tune "Cosi' Cosa"](#) that I often heard via radio and records, but almost never in conversation to express what "**menzamenz**" meant to us. "**Menzamenz**" flowed from our lips and "**cosi' cosa**" did not. In French "**consi consa**" is **cosi' cosa** but for sure my people would NOT use the French version!

Why reject cosi' cosa? Mostly because "**menzamenz**" or "**menz menz**" comports with the dialects of my elders, and it works for my ilk. No need to pick up Italian "**slang**". Driven by familiarity, lack of "education", and maybe tribal prejudice, we didn't need any "**cosi' cosa**" when we had "**menzamenz**"!

Am I proud of myself for sticking with the dialect over more universal Italian? Well menzamenz!

[Marx Brothers| A Night at the Opera | Cosi Cosa](#) - Did Allan Jones do songs justice? Well cosi' cosa!

Two Italian American quickies!

Cassa-Banga = Bang Box = Jalopy (car that bangs, rattles and creaks) "Eh paisanu, still drivin that cassa-banga?"

Bac-casa = Back House/Outhouse "Eh paisanu, did you get promoted?" "Se', sugnu boss 'i a bac-casa!" ("yes, I am boss of the outhouse!") sarcastic response meaning "No, I'm still at the bottom of the totem pole!"

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What happened around July-August 2010?

Starfish Throwers



Special thanks to the August Starfish Thrower team . Pictured above are Berto Vecchiarelli, Joe Panteleo, Tony Bono and Vinnie Spadaro missing from the picture are Joe Parise and John Famelette.

If you read the President's Message in the July edition of this newsletter, you will recall that we singled out two members as the Club's July Starfish Throwers because of their voluntarism to the Club. Each month, we will identify one or more members who are making a difference and deserve the Starfish Thrower title.

The August Starfish Thrower title is being given to a team of members who have undertaken the beautification and restoration of the porch. This is a serious and time-consuming project that has already taken many man-hours. The skill and dedication of this team is literally saving the Club

thousands of dollars. Their efforts are truly making a difference!

The team includes Tony Bono, who is leading the effort, Berto Vecchiarelli, Club honoree for 2010, Vinnie Spadaro, Tony Parise, Joe Panteleo, and John Famelette. If you happen to see any of these members at the Club, take a moment to express your appreciation for their hard work. There is much that remains to be done before the porch project is completed. I am sure that if you want to help with porch repairs, the team will warmly receive your presence.

Ernie, aka "High Priced Singer", issued a compliment to his potential competitors and for an instant the World seemed to stop spinning!

Volunteerism has been and is the life blood of the Club. These members blazed a trail of unselfish Volunteerism in the 21st Century

Paul was a learned gentleman with quite a wit, and he probably had the biggest most productive fig tree in Poughkeepsie!

Italians Do Have Talent

If you were there, you would not have believed what you were seeing... a wonderful group of people who were either Italian Center members or related to members were simply outstanding in performing their talent to the judges. On Thursday, July 8th, this talented group of entertainers showed their "stuff" to a panel of judges.

Many of the contestants and their family members enjoyed a Sera Italiana night dinner before performing. The audience for the audition consisted of about 40 family members and 6 judges. Ernie Bruno, one of the organizers and also a judge, said, "I was completely blown away by the depth of talent each of the contestants had. They were not just talented, but surprisingly talented. Not that I didn't think it was true, but I now know that the Italians of the Center do have talent."

The talent search is still open, so if you know of anyone in your family who has a unique talent that they would like others to know about, now is the time to step forward. The entry process is still open and there are still some candidates who need to be judged, so it's not too late to call committee co-chairmen Larry Levine (914-489-8410) or John Bordi (845 453-7117).

As of the date of this newsletter, the following individuals have displayed their talent and were selected by the committee to be performers in the Italians Have Talent program:

- Ellen Haspel and son, David - Vocalist and Guitar
- Bill Sleight - Vocalist
- Tanner & Shannon Martin-Ignaffo - Violinists
- Paul Bertolozzi - Accordionist
- Tony Scivolette - Comedian



Paul Bertolozzi shows off his talents!

- Janine Rossi - Vocalist

Currently, there are no plans for the performers to participate at this year's Festa. The committee is planning to hold a Variety Show in which each of the performers will be asked to present their talent to family and friends. There are also plans to hold a Dinner Theater show in late October. The major objective of the committee at this time is to take an assorted array of talent and mold it into a cohesive, entertaining, and professional show.

Contact List

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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	
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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