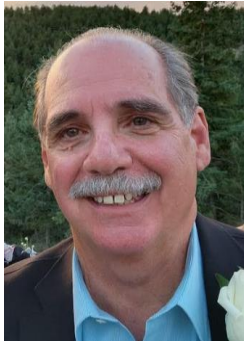




# LA PAROLA

*Bringing You Information About the Denver Lodge Since 1958*

Maggio/May 2026 Issue



Brothers and Sisters,

By now you have heard about the passing of our very own Sammy Johnson.

Sammy was just 56 years old, and he recently retired from Safeway after 38 years of service. With his newly found spare time he was able to help quite a bit more here at the hall. He was a huge help at our April General Meeting. Sammy was an avid Bocce player and had played in our Summer League for many years. His teammates on “Sammy’s” will continue playing, and they will honor him by keeping that team name. We will miss his smile and quick wit. RIP Sammy.

Congratulations to our very own Susan Giamarvo! She is the distinguished 2026 recipient of the Dante Alighieri Society of Denver Donna di Merito award, recognized for her outstanding contributions to the promotion and preservation of Italian Culture. She was given this award at a luncheon on May 3rd.

Don't forget our Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday May 9th. Proceeds from this event will benefit Revital Colorado. They bring a proactive approach to serving those who serve us. For more information, go to [revitalcolorado.org](http://revitalcolorado.org). If you would like to donate baked goods for the bake sale let me or Rita DeFrange know.

Our next General Meeting is Wednesday May 20th, when we will award our annual scholarships to five young people, and also present Quilts of Valor to veterans. See you all there!

MANGIA BENE, RIDI SPESSO, AMA MOLTA

President Sal



La Parola  
Maggio/May 2026

Sal Siraguse, Dr. Rita DeFrangé, LeAnne DiTirro, Eleanor Gaccetta,, Kathy Holt, Beverly Mendicello

### Building Contacts

Desi Ramirez – Facility Manager

We are looking for a member who would like to chair our building committee. Please contact Sal if you are interested!

### Health & Condolence

Joannie Flynn [Joannie818@gmail.com](mailto:Joannie818@gmail.com)  
Hall Rental – Sal Siraguse (303) 238 - 8055

### Address Changes

[SOIDenver2075@gmail.com](mailto:SOIDenver2075@gmail.com)

### By-Laws

According to Denver By-Laws, Article 1-Paragraph 4, “The by-law commission shall accept for consideration any by-law or change submitted in writing by a regular member in good standing by March 1 of each calendar year.

### 2025-2026 Lodge Officers

#### **President**

Sal Siraguse  
[siraguse56@msn.com](mailto:siraguse56@msn.com)

#### **Vice President**

Joe Calabrese  
[JAC5260@MSN.com](mailto:JAC5260@MSN.com)

#### **Orator**

John Capone  
[caponejj@msn.com](mailto:caponejj@msn.com)

#### **Recording Secretary**

Anna Vann  
[tmvenv@msn.com](mailto:tmvenv@msn.com)

#### **Treasurer**

John Callor  
[Calor95@gmail.com](mailto:Calor95@gmail.com)

#### **Financial Secretary**

Dr. Rita DeFrangé  
[ritadefrange@gmail.com](mailto:ritadefrange@gmail.com)

#### **Guard**

Joe Bonfiglio  
[jbonfig44@gmail.com](mailto:jbonfig44@gmail.com)

#### **Chaplain**

Barb Pietrafeso  
[babeepietrafeso@outlook.com](mailto:babeepietrafeso@outlook.com) [jbonfig@gmail.com](mailto:jbonfig@gmail.com)

#### **Trustee/Historian**

Ramona (Mo) Toto-Travis  
[alnmo@comcast.net](mailto:alnmo@comcast.net)

#### **Trustee**

Jack Loth  
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#### **Trustee**

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#### **Trustee**

Joannie Flynn  
[Joannie818@gmail.com](mailto:Joannie818@gmail.com)

#### **Trustee**

John Gargano

#### **Immediate Past**

##### **President**

Pam Wright  
[pcake@comcast.net](mailto:pcake@comcast.net)

##### **Mistress of Ceremonies**

Linda Villano  
[l\\_villano@comcast.net](mailto:l_villano@comcast.net)

##### **Mistress of Ceremonies**

Kim Bonfiglio

### **Having an Event this Year? by Dr. Rita DeFrangé**

If you are interested in renting the hall, please use the “[contact us](#)” from the website or call 303-238-8055. We are booking and want to be able to accommodate all inquires! Grazie!



## MEMBERSHIP



Membership dues are due! Everyone that requested Zelle has an invite in email, anyone who needs an invoice let us know. If you have any questions, you can “contact us” via email and request an invoice or a payment plan. We have over 400 members and are still growing! Something to celebrate for sure!



**Come Polka on Sundays!** Sunday afternoon Polka dancing is back in full force!! If you’re interested, dancing is from 2-5:30 pm Sundays. Need information, contact Bev Meyer at 970-222-4331 or email [coloradopolkaklub@gmail.com](mailto:coloradopolkaklub@gmail.com).

### **Book Club**

by Pam Wright & Maggie Iozzo



Book Club meets the second Monday of the month. Meeting place Panera on 64<sup>th</sup> & Yank, 12:00 p.m. everyone is welcome. *May: Broken Country, June: Twice, July: The First Time I Saw Him, August: The Correspondent, September: The Crossroads, October: Remarkably Bright Creatures*

**Becoming ADA Compliant** In the State of Colorado, legislation has all Public Agencies pursuing ADA compliancy. That means we will begin to ensure 12 Point font, Calibri text, using links and making sure our colors can be read by those in our community with disabilities. More to come in future issues.

### **Dancing at the Lodge – Come and Enjoy**

Sponsored by our own Maggie Francucci! Ballroom dancing is back in full swing too! They meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays of most months,. To verify or check with Cathy and/or Maggie at [Http://danceconnectioncolorado.com](http://danceconnectioncolorado.com) There is a one-hour class for various types of dances followed by open dance the rest of the evening.





At the April meeting the following applicants were inducted into the SOI Denver Lodge 2075. Congratulations and welcome.

Jenna Erdle, Rob and Alicia Cristinzio, Jeff and Traci Stoffel, Michael Giles, Nicole, Izaak and Sebastian Skorka, Crystal and Michael Gabriel, Robert Saunders, Bram Rooij, Danny Sweeney, Gloria Wright, Michael Soma, Michael Lombardi, Barbara Amato, Silvio Caputo, Theresa Calabrese, Tonia Williams, James Wright, Mike Rossi, Gianfranco Pigoni, Beverly Conway, Marge Wilbanks, Peter, Renee, and Peter C. D'Ambrosia, James and Cindy Pughes, Debbie Weismann, Steven and Amy Garhart, Frank and Thanyou Busnardo, Jim Zajac, Gary Lauricella, Gary and Kai Allmendinger, Jenna and Jackson Wright, Tony and Cindi Lombard, Pasqualina Falco, Ricardo Ortega, Joe and Kassidy Mastriona, Father Hugh Guentner, Christopher and Carey Depetris, Paul Finamore



### Good Thoughts and Wishes

From Surgery and/or illness: Carlo Amato, John Carochi, Nicki Rossi, and Tony Lombardi

Condolences: Dorothy Alberts mother of Rhinda Peterson, Sammy Johnson

### Upcoming Events for ALL Italian Clubs

By Dr. Rita DeFrange



#### May

**May 2nd - Trentini, Annual Bocce Tourney, at Sons**

**May 3rd - Prima Domenica, Sponsored by the Mt. Carmel Altar & Rosary Society. Altar & Rosary are also sponsoring a flower sale in conjunction with Spano Gardens.**

**May 3rd - Dante Pueblo, scholarship brunch at the Country Club**

**May 9th - Spaghetti Dinner - Sons & Daughters of Italy benefitting Revital Colorado**

**May 10<sup>th</sup> – Mother's Day**

**May 17th - Mother's Day Brunch, event held at the Potenza Lodge**

#### June

**June 7 - Prima Domenica**

**June 13 - Vintage Bridal Show, Little Italy of Denver, location TBD**

**June 20th - Bocce, Booze and BBQ, Sons & Daughters of Italy, Charity TBD**

**June 21st - Fathers Day**

**June 28th - All Club Community Italian "Polenta" Picnic (contact Anna Vann for details), Applewood Park**





### New Member Initiation

Those applicants who were approved by the Sons and Daughters of Italy Denver Lodge 2075 members between October 2025 and March 2026 were officially initiated at the April meeting. Our membership now has an entire age-range and brings a new era. Congratulations to those who were initiated. Please join in our activities, volunteer to be on a committee or work an event and enjoy our company!





Bob Guisto reminded members they had a few days to submit applications for scholarships which will be awarded at the May Meeting

### Food For Thought Charity

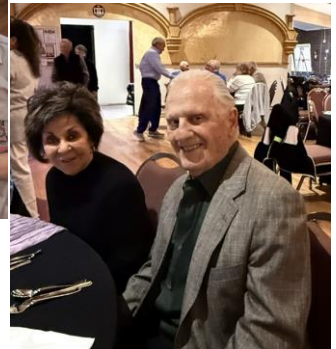
We are thrilled to announce that our first Spaghetti Dinner of the year raised **\$5,000** for [Food for Thought](#). We were honored to have founder Bob Bell join our last meeting to personally receive the donation.

To put this impact into perspective: each \$5 bag of food provides a weekend of meals for a child who typically relies on school lunch programs. This donation will provide **1,000 bags** for children in need. Thank you to every member and friend who joined us—your support truly makes a difference.



### Rodder's Ball

On April 25<sup>th</sup> the Italians of American sponsored their Annual Rodder's Ball. What a Success! Thanks to all the Sons and Daughters members who attended and joined the fun. The Italians of America charities were Project Sol Flower St. Elizabeth's of Hungary Lunch Line to Feed the Homeless, Caruso family Charities, and Joyful Journeys. Rus Canino provided the music, and everyone danced the night away! Stay tuned for their Annual Red Lion Run Car Show on July 25<sup>th</sup>! The Sons and Daughters of Italy would like to thank the IOA for choosing our hall for their event!



SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ITALY  
DENVER LODGE

# SPAGHETTI DINNER

BENEFITTING REVITAL COLORADO

COL USA

## REVITAL

A LIFELINE FOR OUR FRONTLINE

**Saturday, May 9th**  
12:00 PM - 5:00 PM

SONS OF ITALY DENVER LODGE  
5925 W. 32nd Ave., Wheat Ridge, CO 80212

**\$12 Per Person | \$8 for Kids Under 10**

Enjoy a delicious spaghetti dinner with all the fixings!  
Stop by our Bake sale as well!



All proceeds go to benefit Revital Colorado, a non-profit supporting first responders and their families. [www.revitalcolorado.org](http://www.revitalcolorado.org)

*Baked Goods Needed for the Bake Sale*

### TIROLESITRENTINI DEL COLORADO ANNUAL BOCCETOURNAMENT



**SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026**

**PRIZES**

CASH PRIZES FOR 1st & 2nd place

Raffle Drawing Also!

**Fundraiser Tournament**  
Net Proceeds will go to Friends of Man

Only 16 teams will be allowed, so sign up fast!!  
Sons of Italy Courts, 32nd & Gray, Wheat Ridge  
8 am Check-in and Continental Breakfast  
8:30 Tournament Starts

Cost: \$120 per team, including tournament, breakfast, lunch, and beverages. Checks payable to TTDC, c/o Anna Vann, 6895 Morrison Drive, Denver, CO 80221 or Venmo (call for details)

Questions?  
Contact Anna Vann  
303-618-8023 or [tmvnn@msn.com](mailto:tmvnn@msn.com)

Team Captain \_\_\_\_\_ Team Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Player Names \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_




**SPECIAL Plan to attend the May Meeting**  
The May 20<sup>th</sup> SOI meeting will be a special and exciting evening. We will honor five high school seniors receiving a 2026 Sons and Daughters of Italy Denver Lodge Scholarship. AND... We will honor veterans with Quilts of Valor. See you May 20<sup>th</sup>!

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ITALY  
DENVER LODGE 2075

## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Call for Articles & Topics: Newsletter Contributions

**WANTED: YOUR IDEAS & INSIGHTS**

Success Stories    Research Requests  
Member Updates    Community Insights

Have a topic you're curious about? We'll do the legwork and develop the article for you!

**HOW TO CONTRIBUTE**

Submit your articles or topic suggestions to:  
**Ellie Gaccetta**  
[\[1Ellie2@comcast.net\]](mailto:1Ellie2@comcast.net)

"Help us make our newsletter more informative, engaging, and reflective of the incredible members of Lodge 2075. We look forward to your contributions!"

Maximum words for articles is 350 words.

### 15 Things Italy Gave the World

- ABC** The alphabet you're reading right now Thanks to ancient Rome, much of the world uses the Latin alphabet.
- Pizza** Born in Naples... copied everywhere.
- Pasta** Simple, perfect, global.
- The Renaissance** Italy helped pull Europe out of the Dark Ages.
- Opera** Pure emotion, invented in Italy.
- Espresso** Fast, strong, and now worldwide.
- Modern banking** Florence changed finance forever.
- Roman roads** Engineering so good, we still follow them today.
- The violin** Refined in Italy—changed music forever.
- The thermometer** Early versions developed by Italians like Galileo.
- The telescope** Perfected by Galileo, changing how we see the universe.
- The radio** Pioneered by Marconi—modern communication starts here.
- The battery** Invented by Alessandro Volta.
- The parachute** First conceptualised by Leonardo da Vinci.
- La Dolce Vita** A way of living the rest of the world still dreams about.



## Italy

By Beverly Mendicello

1. What is the capital of Italy? Rome
2. What colors can you find on the Italian flag? Green, White & Red
3. Which currency is used in Italy? Euro
4. In which century was the Italian Unification? Nineteenth Century
5. Who was the last King of Italy? Umberto II
6. What is Italy's shape similar to? A boot
7. What is the official name of Italy? Repubblica Italiana (Italian Republic)
8. Which countries share a land border with Italy (not counting the enclaves)? (1 point per country) Switzerland, France, Slovenia and Austria
9. Two countries are enclaves in Italy. Which ones are they? San Marino and Vatican City



## Maple Glazed Salmon with Pineapple Relish

*This easy salmon dish creates a delicious crust*

By Kathy Holt

**For the Fish:** ½ teaspoon paprika, ½ teaspoon chili powder, 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin, 1/2 teaspoon sugar, ½ teaspoon kosher or sea salt, 2 (6 ounce) salmon fillets, 1 tablespoons maple syrup

**For the Pineapple Relish:** 2 cups of diced fresh pineapple, 1 ½ tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro, 2 tablespoons lime juice

**For the Glaze:** 1 tablespoon maple syrup

**Instructions:** **1.** Mix the paprika, ancho chili powder, cumin, sugar and salt together in a small bowl.

Make the pineapple relish by combining the ingredients in a bowl. **2.** Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and coat with oil to prevent fish from sticking. Set the oven rack about 6 inches from the top of the oven and preheat the broiler to high. **3.** Place the fillets on the baking sheet and sprinkle evenly with the spice mixture. Broil for about 5-6 minutes, until it is almost done, around 140 degrees on your instant read thermometer.

Remove the pan from the oven and brush the fillets evenly with the maple syrup. Broil for one minute more.

Transfer the fish to warm plates and top with pineapple relish. Serves 2.



## Bourbon Limoncello Cocktail

By Leeann Ditirro

A refreshing and zesty drink, bright, and citrusy drink that balances the warmth of bourbon with the sweet, tart notes of lemon liqueur. It is a delightful twist on a classic whiskey sour, often enjoyed on warm days or as a sophisticated after-dinner drink. Ingredients: 2 ounces Bourbon, 1-ounce Limoncello, ½ ounce fresh lemon juice, Ice Cubes, Lemon twist for garnish, Optional – fresh sprig of thyme or mint (for top), A jigger or tiny measuring cup, Cocktail Shaker, Strainer, A short class resembling a rock glass, Citrus juicer, Bar Spoon. Instructions: Measure and mix all ingredients in a cocktail shaker filled with ice. Strain into glasses filled with ice. Add preferred garnish and enjoy.



We recently asked members to share articles or topics they'd like researched and placed in the La Parola. Below is the first article we received. Send topics or articles (limited to 350 words) to [1Ellie2@comcast.net](mailto:1Ellie2@comcast.net). I'll do the research

### Your Family's Village Is Still There

By: Nicole Skorka



My great-grandparents left Sicily in the early 1900s. Like so many others, they arrived at Ellis Island with almost nothing. They shared a few passed down tales, echoes of cultural traditions, and good food, but never the full story. For years, I assumed that history was lost. Then I started researching my family for my dual citizenship application. After that, everything changed.

What began as a search for documents became something I hadn't expected: a journey into who my family actually was, where they lived, what they left behind, and why. I found myself reading handwritten archive records, tracing surname origins, finding distant cousins I didn't know, and feeling, for the first time, that Sicily was not just a place my ancestors came from. It was a place I could go back to.

Heritage travel is not sightseeing. It's something closer to listening. Before you book a trip, spend time with whatever your family preserved: naturalization papers, old photographs, baptismal and marriage certificates, a surname that points to a region. Italian civil records go back to 1809 in most regions, and church records go back further. Francesco Curione of 007 Italian Records in Palermo has built a career on making those records accessible to families like yours. There are also helpful regional genealogy groups on Facebook.

When you arrive, you will find that your ancestral home is very much alive: a family-owned bar on the piazza serving espresso for three generations, a church where Mass is still celebrated on the feast day of the patron saint your great-grandmother prayed to. In many cases, residents still remember emigrant families.

Some travelers come home with records that strengthen their dual citizenship application. Some come home with a photograph taken in front of the house where past generations were born. If you have a village name on a scrap of paper somewhere, it is worth following.

Nicole Skorka is the founder of Via Vero Tours, a Denver-based travel agency specializing in immersive cultural and heritage journeys to Italy. She can be reached at [nskorka@viaverotours.com](mailto:nskorka@viaverotours.com)



Yvonne's message simply said: :Jeri Santangelo and his family orchestra.....

Jerry Santangelo was a Denver native and musician who played trumpet with Johnny DeFrango's band at the Lakewood Country Club. He also played trumpet in the Ultimates and Eddie Santangelo Combo..



## 'How Are You?' Has Lost All Meaning. Here's A Better Way to Greet People

By Ellie Gaccetta

I read an article from Time Magazine that struck a whole chord and not just a note. It is worth sharing. Every day you probably ask many of the people you meet with the same question: "How are you?" Yet this phrase, once a genuine inquiry, has morphed into little more than a greeting while passing a colleague in the hall or running into a neighbor in the produce aisle. Scholars now say 'how are you' has turned into a saying and not a question. When it stopped being a question we stopped expecting an answer.

But it can still be a great question if you're prepared to listen to the answer. It implies I have space and time for you right now and that's worth being intentional about. "How are you? has become a social script because people are so busy rushing to the next thing—and the thing after that—that they are never fully present for whoever is in front of them. Therefore, interactions become quick and transactional. "How are you?" "Good. You?" "Good." Then we move on. We squeeze our conversations into gaps between meetings or errands, and we end up trading these updates instead of sharing what's really going on beneath the surface.

We mistake being in touch for being connected. It's possible to text someone five times a day and still have little idea what's happening in their life. Therapists believe "It's just noise we make at each other to maintain the illusion that we care." Let's be honest, the true answer to "how are you?" isn't always welcome. It's called OK-ness because people are uncomfortable knowing the truth and default to socially acceptable replies of "fine, thanks" when someone is struggling. The stakes of treating "how are you?" like a throwaway greeting are higher than you might expect. When you ask someone how they are and don't take time to hear the answer, you're signaling their experiences don't matter and you don't care.

When we don't slow down enough for meaningful interactions, we end up with few close relationships. Over time, those missed moments of real conversation erode the bond you may have shared. Research suggests close relationships predict how healthy and happy we are as we age. Those relationships aren't built on grand gestures. They are built in the accumulation of small moments when we actually show up for each other and ask how they are and mean it. We take time to listen if they are not 'good.' You don't have to have answers, just an ear.

I challenge you to ask three friends a week how they're doing. Put your phone away, make direct eye contact, and make it clear you're not zipping off somewhere else. If your friend says they're fine but you sense they're not, follow up like this: "No, really, how are you?"

Take time to listen.



## Community Events



**May 2nd - Trentini, Annual Bocce Tourney, at Sons**

**May 9th - Spaghetti Dinner - Sons & Daughters of Italy Benefitting Revital Colorado**

**May 20th - General meeting, Dinner at 6:15 PM, Meeting at 7 - Presentation of Quilts of Valor and Scholarships**

**June 15th - General Meeting, Dinner at 6:15 PM, Meeting 7 PM**

**June 20th - Bocce, Booze and BBQ, Sons & Daughters of Italy, Charity TBD**

## Contact Us

Order Sons & Daughters of Italy in America,  
Denver Lodge #2075  
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[soidenver2075@gmail.com](mailto:soidenver2075@gmail.com)  
[osiadenver2075.org](http://osiadenver2075.org)



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