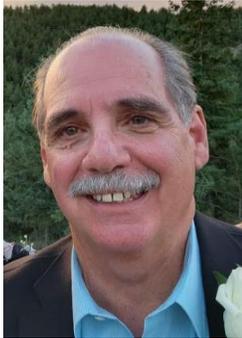




# LA PAROLA

*Bringing You Information About the Denver Lodge Since 1958*

Febbraio/February 2026 Issue



Brothers and Sisters,

Did you attend the General Meeting on Wednesday January 21st? If not, you missed an extraordinary Prime Rib dinner including my famous heart attack potatoes and Jack's Primo Roasted Broccoli. Sorry if you missed it.



As the cold grip of January fades away, and the pain of a disappointing end to the Denver Broncos season, hopes are still high for the Nuggets and Avs. And we have some exciting community events coming up!

On Saturday February 28th we will be holding our first Spaghetti Dinner of the year! Proceeds from this event will benefit Food For Thought. FFT strives to eliminate weekend hunger for children in the Denver Metro Area by providing food PowerSacks for the weekend. Each sack contains enough food for two meals for a family of 4. They provide PowerSacks for 26,000 elementary kids at 75 schools!

On March 7th the Italian American Business Association Annual Awards Dinner celebrating outstanding Italian Americans, will be held at Sheraton Denver West. Go to [bravoawardscolorado.com](http://bravoawardscolorado.com) for more information!

On Saturday February 14th, Mt Carmel Church will be holding their La Festa d'Amore Dinner Dance at Cottonwood Lodge at Hyland Hills.

And, of course, don't forget our General Meeting on Wednesday February 18th. We will serve a special meatless dinner as we recognize Ash Wednesday

On March 21st and 22nd, Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church will be holding a St Joseph's Table with a meatless feast of traditional Italian Foods.

Lots of exciting things happening here at the Sons and Daughters of Italy and throughout the community! If you are interested in volunteering at any of our events, please see me or any one of our Council Members!

See you all very soon!

MANGIA BENE, RIDI SPESSO, AMA MOLTA

President Sal



La Parola

Febbraio/February 2026

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

### 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)

#### **Historian- Ramona (Mo) Toto-Travis**

[alnmo@comcast.net](mailto:alnmo@comcast.net)

#### **Trustee**

Vacant

#### **Trustee**

Jack Loth  
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#### **Trustee**

Crist McAfee  
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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!



Our membership is 371+ members strong! If you would like to get a jump on paying your 2026 Dues – go to our website, <https://osiadenver2075.org/> “Contact us” for an invoice. There will be further information after the first of the new year!



***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. *February: Battle Mountain, Mrs. Endicott’s Splendid Adventure, The View from Lake Como*

***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.





### ***Time for Scholars to Shine***

*by: Bob Giusto*

Each year the Denver Lodge awards as many as five scholarships to current high school seniors for the purpose of continuing their education, whether through university programs, trade schools or any other means of furthering their academic and/or vocational endeavors. The program is only open to **high school seniors** who are children or grandchildren of members of the Sons and Daughters of Italy. Thanks to your generosity and support, the scholarship was recently increased to \$1,500. Help us spread the word. Applications are now available at the Denver Lodge 2075 website and must be submitted by April 17, 2026. Winners are mandated to attend the May 20, 2026, meeting when scholarships are formally presented.

Speaking of scholarship recipients, we recently heard from Claire Tompkins, a 2025 recipient. Claire is thriving at the University of Mary. Although college life did take some getting used to, she quickly found out that the hard work of her studies while also honoring her softball scholarship helped make her adjustment smooth.

*Claire stated, "I have been diligent in all my classes and have kept my grades high, even in the subjects that continuously humble me (chemistry). Being in this community and getting to hear from professionals in the fields I am interested in has made me discover more about myself and even changed my mind on what area I would like to specialize in. At first, I had thoughts about physical therapy or chiropractic, but now I am curious about athletic training! I have also befriended people from all over the U.S. and even some international students. Coming from a homeschooler, it has been great being able to study with these people and learn more about their cultures."*

*About her decision to attend the University of Mary, Claire said, "Overall, I am enjoying college life tremendously. I like being independent, studying something I'm passionate about, and playing the sport, I love. The University of Mary has truly been a great fit for me."*

Members of the Denver Lodge should be delighted to see our scholarship donations being put to good use by our worthy recipients. Claire Tompkins is certainly a shining example. We wish her the best of luck with her continued success, and we also look forward to the honoring

**Many Thanks to our Great Members!**

*by Dr. Rita DeFrango*



In 2025 we held over a dozen major events, catered and facilitated weddings, public events and funerals. And we held summer bocce, retirement parties and picnics. We also decorated for events and holidays. We are fortunate we have a great building and wonderful grounds. But more importantly - we have WONDERFUL MEMBERS! Every event we hold is supported by volunteers...and those volunteers are our members. We would never be able to do what we do for the lodge membership and community without our member volunteers! Thank you!





By Dr. Rita Defrange

At the National Western Stock Show, in January, the Governor helped the Colorado Department of Agriculture kick off the celebrations of America's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday and Colorado's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of statehood by unveiling a mural by Colorado-based artist Thomas "Detour" Evans, that showcases Colorado's agriculture history: past, present and future. Kate Greenburg, Colorado Agriculture Commissioner said the mural celebrates hardworking Coloradans who put food on our tables and help drive our local economies for the past 150 years. "The artist brilliantly captured the heart of farming and ranching traditions, from those of the past to the innovative spirit of today shaping the future."

It is important to know Italian Americans have played a foundational role in Colorado's agricultural history, transforming the state's arid plains into productive farmland. While many arrived for mining and railroad work, a substantial number transitioned to agriculture, bringing Old World techniques that helped define Colorado's "truck farming" (vegetable gardening) industry. Italians contributed to foundational areas of the Colorado economy. The "Truck Farming" Revolution was the first contribution. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Italian immigrants established **truck farms**—small-scale farms that produced vegetables for local restaurants and markets—around Denver, Pueblo, and the Arkansas River Valley. The second area was through infrastructure and land reclamation. Italian immigrants didn't just plant crops; they built the infrastructure that made farming possible in Colorado's dry climate. And finally, Italians brought cultural specialties for a regional impact.

The mural unfolds as a visual narrative from left to right, designed to spark imagination and highlight the interconnected systems that sustain agriculture across the state. The narrative is fueled by the snowmelt of Colorado's Rocky Mountains — an essential source of life that feeds the fields, rangelands, and livestock. By highlighting a range of geographic and climate conditions, the mural depicts a key strength of Colorado agriculture: the wide diversity and variety of foods produced in our state. The mural will travel the State during the year.

### Good Thoughts and Wishes

From Surgery and/or illness: Marcia Brunetti, Joannie Flynn, Joe Marino, Mike Rondinelli, and Carlo Amato.

Patrick Lubrano had a heart transplant in March 2025 and has experienced numerous setbacks. A fund has been created to offset the family's many financial burdens. If you would like to donate, go to <https://angellink.com>. Search for Help Patrick Recover





### How many of these film stars can you pair with their birth name?

By Beverly Mendicello

1. Dean Martin
2. Boris Karloff
3. Jerry Lewis
4. Cary Grant
5. Joan Crawford
6. Marilyn Monroe
7. Jack Benny
8. George Burns
9. Tony Curtis
10. Roy Rogers
11. Barbara Stanwyck
12. Judy Garland

- A. Archibald Leach
- B. Frances Gumm
- C. Lucille Fay LeSueur
- D. Nathan Birnbaum
- E. Dino Crocetti
- F. Norma Jean Baker
- G. Leonard Slye
- H. William Henry Pratt
- I. Ruby Stevens
- J. Bernard Schwartz
- K. Joseph Levitch
- L. Benjamin Kubelsky

Answer Key: 1. E; 2. H; 3. K; 4. A; 5. C; 6. F; 7. L; 8. D; 9. J; 10. G; 11. I; 12. B

Source: The Book of Unusual Knowledge



At the January meeting, Joe Calabrese was initiated as Vice-President and Crist McAfee was initiated as a Board Trustee.



Members and guests who attended the January monthly meeting were treated to a special dinner of prime rib, scalloped potatoes, broccoli, salad and apple pie! Yum.

In accordance with our by-laws we are announcing a Trustree vacancy on the Council. Ramona Toto-Travis has been nominated to fill this open position. If anyone is interested in being nominated, please contact President Sal. The vacancy will be filled at the next monthly meeting scheduled for February 18<sup>th</sup>.



New members include Gloria Wright. The Denver Lodge 2075 is now at 371 members.

### Pay 2026 Membership Dues

It is time to renew your membership for 2026. Information for paying 2026 can be found at <https://osidadenver2075.org>.





**POTENZA LODGE PRESENTS CARNIVALE DINNER**

Mask Contest  
Swirls of color, hints of mystery, and a dash of delight await!  
Prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place will be awarded.  
Flaunt your fanciful Carnivale mask whether homemade or happily discovered and let the magic begin!

**Saturday, February 7th**  
Cocktails 6:00 pm  
Dinner 6:30 pm  
Tickets \$35

1900 W 38<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Denver, CO 80211

For tickets call or text by February 1st  
Lisa Lokken- 720-297-6951

The Sons & Daughters of Italy

IS HOSTING A *Spaghetti Dinner*

ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH, 2026  
BETWEEN 12 PM AND 5 PM

ADULTS \$12 CHILDREN \$8

**DINE IN OR TAKE OUT**

5925 W 32ND AVE, WHEAT RIDGE

Food For Thought DENVER. Proceeds Benefit FOOD FOR THOUGHT. Stop by the Bake Sale

DENVER SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL POTENZA COMMITTEE PRESENTS

**SIMONE SPADINO**  
INTERNATIONALLY-ACCLAIMED ITALIAN VIOLINIST  
WITH PIANIST JIWON HAN  
AND  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING CHAMBER ORCHESTRA  
BETH VANDERBORGH DIRECTOR

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2026  
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF DENVER  
401 EAST HAMPODEN AVE.  
DENVER, CO 80222

RECEPTION AND REFRESHMENTS FOLLOWING PROGRAM

FEATURING AN ALL FELIX MENDELSON BARTHOLDY PROGRAM

STUDENTS \$15  
ADULTS \$30

TICKETS: [HTTPS://BUY.STRIPE.COM/5K05KE9W1Z6K9NMA1K2N0Q3](https://buy.stripe.com/5k05ke9w1z6k9nma1k2n0q3)

WWW.DENVER-SISTERCITIES.ORG

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFITTING THE POTENZA STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM



We need baked goods for the Bake Sale. If you can donate, please contact Pam Ciancio-Wright at 303-210-6277



**Join Us to March in the St. Patrick's Day Parade**

By Dr. Rita DeFrangé

Come join the Sons & Daughters of Italy as we march with our colors in the Denver St. Patrick's Day Parade! The parade will be held on Saturday 14th. We will meet at the Denver Lodge at 7:30 AM and carpool down to the staging area and decorate our float. All are welcome to meet us there as well. We will publish our number in line as soon as we receive it! And as always - snacks and refreshments will be provided!



## Sloppy Jimmys

By Kathy Holt

*A simple but tasty sandwich for lunch or dinner*

1 lb. chuck [beef](#) ground (80% fat), ½ cup [onion](#), medium chopped, 3 T tomato paste dissolved in 1 cup hot water, ¼ cup [ketchup](#), ½ cup [barbecue sauce](#), 1 tablespoon firmly packed [brown sugar](#), 2 teaspoons [mustard](#), 1 tablespoon [Worcestershire sauce](#), 1 tablespoon white or cider [vinegar](#)

In a large skillet, brown the ground beef and onion. Drain the fat off, add Salt and pepper. Stir in remaining ingredients, simmer covered, 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Taste for seasoning. Add more [barbecue sauce](#) if needed. Serve on your favorite toasted buns or rolls. Serves 4



## Blue Lagoon Mocktail

By LeeAnn Ditirro

Ingredients:

1-ounce blue curacao syrup (Torani, or orange simple syrup with a drop of blue food coloring.

2 ounces orange sparkling water

4 ounces lemonade

2 ounces *non-alcoholic vodka* (Arkay NA vodka, or Strkk not vodka)

1 orange slice.

In a highball glass, add the blue curacao simple syrup, orange sparkling water and optional non-alcoholic vodka. Stir lightly until combined. Fill the glass ¾ full of ice and slowly pour over the lemonade and blue mixture. Ooh and ahhh over the ombre effect before stirring together. Garnish with an orange slice and serve.



## Grand Lodge Website

We forget that in addition to the Denver Lodge 2075 website, there is also a website for the Grand Lodge. This website contains information related to all Italian clubs and what events they are sponsoring. Take the time to visit [www.osdiacolorado.com/linksource](http://www.osdiacolorado.com/linksource) to see if there is anything you are interested about or curious to attend.





Each year the Italian American Business Association hosts the Annual Bravo Awards. The voting is now open and we asking our members to vote for the Sons and Daughters of Italy Denver Lodge to receive the best **“cultural event of 2025”** by selecting the Italian Heritage Festival in the list on the website. Our membership hosted the Italian Heritage Festival in October 2025. That event attendance was beyond what any organizations could have imagined. The voting for 2026 is now open. The website is <https://bravoawardscolorado.com>. Please go to the site and vote.

### Upcoming Events for ALL Italian Clubs

By Dr. Rita DeFrance

On January 27<sup>th</sup> members from Italian organizations in the Denver area met at the Denver Lodge for a casual event to meet each other and discuss upcoming events. The object was to develop a way we can support each other in a collaborative effort. As you will notice, there are a variety of events and activities hosted by different entities. Below is the calendar of events for February and March that were discussed. Save the dates or mark your calendars to attend those events which are of interest to you.

#### February

**February 1st** - Prima Domenica at Mt. Carmel, *Food for Thought*

**February 1st** - St. Ann's - Spaghetti Dinner

**February 6th** - Carnevale, Dante Pueblo (*awaiting advertising*)

**February 7th** - Carnivale sponsored by Potenza

**February 7th** - **A Culinary Experience**, Dante, 2 chefs cooking a romantic dinner, location Mt. Carmel

**February 11th** - **Movie night IABA**, held at Sons

**February 14th** - [La Festa d'Amore](#), Altar & Rosary, at Cottonwood Lodge at Hyland Hills

**February 18<sup>th</sup>** – Monthly meeting Sons and Daughters of Italy, Denver Lodge

**February 19** - **Taste of Italy 6:30 PM**, Dante (year long monthly taste of Italy - announce month before)

**February 21** - A walk through History with Luciano La Valle, Dante - Apex Sr. Center

**February 26th** - Community mtg - historic district, Mt. Carmel Parish Hall

**February 28th** - Spaghetti Dinner, Sons & Daughters of Italy benefitting “Food for Thought” (see flyer attached)

#### March

**March 1st** - Prima Domenica, Sponsored by the Italians of America

**March 7th** - [Bravo Awards](#) Gala, Sheridan Hotel in Lakewood

**March 13th** - Denver Sister Cities (DSC) Potenza - Violin Simone Spadino, Vienna Orchestra, First Universalist Church 7 to 9, drinks and food, all the proceeds go to student scholarships

**March 14th** - Denver St. Patrick's Day Parade - join the Sons & Daughters to attend the Parade, meet at 7:30 AM at the Denver Lodge (*more information to be provided*)

**March 15th** - Potenza Corned Beef Dinner, Potenza Lodge from 12:30 5:30

**March 18th** – Monthly Meeting sons and Daughters of Italy, Denver Lodge

**March 19th** - Dante Alighieri Society, (DAS) Denver - Taste of Italy

**March 21/22** - Our Lady of Mt. Carmel - St. Joseph's Table, 4-7y, 11 AM to 3 PM

\*\*\*Museum, Pueblo - Davinci Exhibit information coming!



## How We Live

by Ellie Gaccetta

February is Heart Month. Judging from almost every song ever written, humans are obsessed with the heart...love, loneliness, happiness, etc. But the actual, physical organ? Many of us go through the day without giving it much thought. According to the CDC, heart disease kills more people than **all** cancers combined. Let that sink in. As we age, both men and women are at risk of heart health. Lifestyle tweaks can help protect your heart at any age. Here are some of the simplest and most effective science-backed strategies to follow each day. If you falter, give yourself some grace and try again. Every step you take in the right direction is important.

**Eat produce at breakfast.** Start at breakfast with oatmeal and fresh or frozen blueberries or raspberries. The fiber from berries and oats help support healthy cholesterol levels and reduce chronic inflammation. **Brush your teeth and don't forget to floss.** Good oral hygiene helps prevent plaque buildup on your teeth. Plaque is not only unsightly it can enter the bloodstream and cause problems with almost every organ. Dentists recommend brushing twice a day with annual cleaning. **Fill up your water bottle.** Water is essential for overall health. When you do not drink enough water, your entire system suffers. **Hit the gym.** By now you all know this is something I preach and do regularly. No interest in going to the gym? You can exercise in your living room, yard, or neighborhood walking path. Exercise lowers blood pressure, cholesterol, body fat, and the risk of heart disease. Try to get 150 minutes of exercise weekly, about 30 minutes 5 days a week. Choose an activity and stick with it. **Don't skip lunch.** Lunch is often an after-thought, but it is important. A balanced lunch helps stabilize energy levels, curb cravings, and support consistent health. Have a salad, vegetables, soup, Greek yogurt, or cottage cheese with fruit. **Go for a Walk.** Taking time out of your day for a quick stroll has many benefits. Opting for a brisk pace for 15 minutes results in many benefits to your heart, mind, and body. **Grab an afternoon snack.** Shoot for something healthy like celery or an apple with peanut butter or carrots with hummus. Stay away from the cookie jar or candy drawer. **Stand up and move.** Shoot for at least one-two minutes every hour. Breaking up those sedentary sessions is important for your heart and waist. **Take deep breaths.** Deep breathing can induce a sense of calm. **Mix up your protein at dinner.** People need more protein to maintain muscle mass and keep your body functioning. Lean proteins like lean meat, chicken, fish, poultry, tofu, beans, and legumes are good choices. **Hang out with your friends and family.** Spending time with people you love and enjoy is good for you. **Wind down with meditation.** Take a few moments each day to be grateful and give thanks. You'll rest better. **Go to bed.** Lots of factors mess with our z's. Sleep is the drug our body needs most. Your body restores itself while you sleep. Your heart will thank you if you try to be mindful of these basics in your day!



## Community Events



### February

**Feb 11th** - Movie night IABA, *held at Sons*

**February 18th** - OSDIA Social Meeting, begins at 6 PM

**February 28th** - Spaghetti Dinner, *Sons & Daughters of Italy benefitting "Food for Thought"*  
(see flyer on page 6)

### March

**March 7th** - [Bravo Awards](#) Gala, Sheridan Hotel in Lakewood

**March 14th** - Denver St. Patrick's Day Parade - join the Sons & Daughters to attend the Parade, meet at 7:30 AM at the Denver Lodge (*more information to be provided*)

**March 18th** - OSDIA Social Meeting, begins at 6PM

## Contact Us

Order Sons & Daughters of Italy in America,  
Denver Lodge #2075  
5925 West 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, WheatRidge, Colorado 80212

303-238-8055  
[soidenver2075@gmail.com](mailto:soidenver2075@gmail.com)  
[osiadenver2075.org](http://osiadenver2075.org)



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