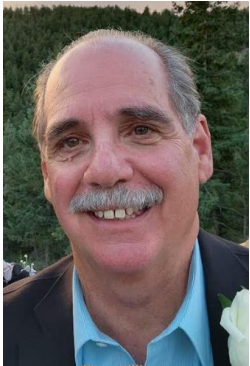




# LA PAROLA

*Bringing You Information About the Denver Lodge Since 1958*

December / Dicembre 2023



Brothers and Sisters,

I want to start off this month by thanking all the members who helped pull off that amazing Thanksgiving Dinner we enjoyed at our November meeting! A big thank you to Linda Villano, Rita DeFrango, Anna Vann, Patrick Lubrano, Danny DiTirro, John Remigio, Beverly Lilly, Beverly and Ed Mendicello, Rose Vecharelli, John Gargano, Diana Williams, Steve Green. And of course, Leanne behind the bar. I may have missed someone, if I have, please poke me next time you see me.

At our December 20th General Meeting we will be preparing a Seafood Dinner for members and guests! Come early, as we raise a glass or two, sing a few carols and kick off the Holiday Season in style. After dinner, we will be doing a Christmas Ornament Exchange as well as a Christmas Sweater contest. See the article in this newsletter for more details on the fun activities.

I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a safe, healthy, happy and prosperous New Year!! God Bless!

Fraternally yours, President Sal



## Celebrating Veteran's Day at the Sons & Daughters of Italy by Pam Wright

In my mind, there is no better time to show appreciation to First Responders and Veterans than at Thanksgiving. Over 150 people filled our hall with smiles and gratitude. After a delicious turkey dinner prepared by our members, we gave tribute to our veterans and first responders.

Our own member Josh Thompkins, (grandson of Phil and Nikki Rossi) along with Scout Troop 999 presented the colors and led the group with the National Anthem. Josh dismissed the group and President Sal, and I introduced all Law Enforcement, Fire Fighters, EMTs and Veterans. Each was presented with applause and a small token of our appreciation. Our evening ended with Fire Fighter (member) Jake Regan saying the closing prayer.



Thank you to all that participated and made such nice tribute to all!



# La Parola

December / Dicembre

Pam Wright, Anna Vann, Sal Siraguse , Cyndi Lubrano,  
LeAnne DiTirro, , Eleanor Gaccetta,  
Kathy Holt, and Dr. Rita DeFrangé

## Building Contacts

Desi Ramirez – Facility Manager

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

## Health & Condolence

Angelina Sether 303-989-2251

## Hall Rental

Anna Vann transitioning out...looking for help!

## Address Changes

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.

## 2023-2024 Lodge Officers

President

Sal Siraguse

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

Vice President

Patrick Lubrano

[Patricklubrano@yahoo.com](mailto:Patricklubrano@yahoo.com)

Orator & Past President

Pam Wright

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

Recording Secretary

Anna Vann

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

Treasurer

Susan Giamarvo

[susangurule@msn.com](mailto:susangurule@msn.com)

Financial Secretary

Dr. Rita DeFrangé

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

Guard

TJ Henderson

[TJHenderson435@hotmail.com](mailto:TJHenderson435@hotmail.com)

Chaplain

Barb Pietrafeso

[barb@coloradosownrealestate.com](mailto:barb@coloradosownrealestate.com)

Historian- Open

Trustee

John Callor

[Callor95@gmail.com](mailto:Callor95@gmail.com)

Trustee

Joe Marino

[bigjoem52@comcast.net](mailto:bigjoem52@comcast.net)

Trustee

Joe Calabrese

[JAC5260@MSN.COM](mailto:JAC5260@MSN.COM)

Trustee

Joannie Flynn

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

Trustee

John Gargano

Past President

Dominic LoSasso

[dominic@osiacolorado.org](mailto:dominic@osiacolorado.org)

Mistress of Ceremonies

Diana Williams

[piebald4@comcast.net](mailto:piebald4@comcast.net)

Mistress of Ceremonies

LeAnne DiTirro

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

## 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 already booking up for 2024 and want to be able to accommodate all inquires! Grazie!



## **Membership Information**

Just a heads up that in January membership dues notices will be sent out. We are attempting to use technology to assist in streamlining the process so stay tuned for additional information! In the meantime, there are applications in our main entrance area for anyone who would like to join!



## **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**

Book club continues to meet on the second Monday of the month. The month of December will we meet at Olive Garden on 88th & Sheridan. If you would like to join us, please call Pam at 303-210-6277 as we will try to get us seated together.



## **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.



# See you at the Christmas Dance!

**Sons & Daughters of Italy Christmas Party**  
With music from DJ Kristo

Saturday, December 2, 2023  
5:30 to 10 PM  
Appetizers, Dinner & Desserts  
Beer, Wine & Cocktails  
\$40 Members, \$45 Non-Members


 Denver Lodge  
5925 W 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave.  
Wheat Ridge, CO 80212


 Admit One 200

## Finding Purpose, from our own Ellie Gaccetta

When we get bored with life and find ourselves sitting, sulking, depressed and think our lives no longer has a meaning – it is time to challenge yourself and figure out what your purpose in life is in a way that matters to you. This article is taken from the Greater Good Magazine – Science-based Insights for a Meaningful Life. In a recent challenge high school students were asked to think about the world around them and visualize what they would do if they had a magic wand and could change anything and why they would change things. It was an exercise where they could consider more concrete steps toward moving the world closer and making it better for mankind. A similar process was used for seniors to help find a new purpose in life. Instead of envisioning an ideal future world, he suggested seniors ask themselves these three questions: 1) What are you good at? 2) What have you done that gave you a skill that can be used for a cause, and 3) What do you care about in your community? The goal was for older adults to brainstorm ideas for repurposing skills and pursuing interests over a lifetime toward helping the world.

Sometimes it is hard to single out what matters most. Understanding what you value most may help narrow down your purpose in life to something manageable that resonates with you. Once you figure it out what does it say about you as a person? How does it influence your daily life, and can you put the skill to use for the greater good? We all have strengths and skills that we've developed over our lifetimes, which help make up our unique personalities. Many of us might be unsure of what we have to offer. So, then we ask ourselves...1) What am I good at? 2) What do I really enjoy? and, 3) How will I leave my mark on the world? Many adults may have conversations with other people. Others often see things in us that we don't recognize in ourselves. But remember that advice from others can also be off base. The best judge in your purpose might just be your gut intuition.

To that end, finding purpose is about more than just self-reflection. Maybe volunteering in a community organization (think SOI) where you can use your skills to make a meaningful difference. Volunteering also could provide some experience and you're doing good at the same time! This isn't about being a do-gooder although it is easier to find and sustain purpose with the support of others. Studies show volunteering improves our health and longevity. Conversely, volunteering can be deadening. Giving yourself and time has to be invigorating and not draining.

Let's imagine our best self. High school students were asked to look forward and envision where they see themselves at age 40. Studies show that seniors want to reflect backward rather than look ahead. That's because seniors think in terms of what they were unable to accomplish because of other obligations like raising kids or pursuing a career. At any age, to find purpose we must cultivate emotions that help foster inspiration like awe and gratitude. Gratitude is tied to well-being, caring about others, and finding meaning in life, which all help us focus on how we can contribute to the world. Reflecting on our blessings is the basis for "paying it forward" in some ways and that's how gratitude can lead to purpose. We are awe-inspired by the beauty in nature, or perhaps someone who helped you in life. This is where we get the energy and motivation to carry out our purposeful goals. Finally, look to the people you admire most to help find your own purpose. Reading about civil rights leaders or climate activists may give us a moral boost and serve as motivation for working toward the greater good for all of us. However, looking at larger-than-life examples may be intimidating. Look for everyday people who do good in smaller ways. Maybe you have a friend whose passion inspires you. You don't need fame to fulfill your purpose in life. You just need to find your inner compass and start taking the steps in the direction to get you to where you'd like to be. **What's your purpose?**



**POTICA (PO-TEEZA PRONUNCIATION)** from Ed Mendicello

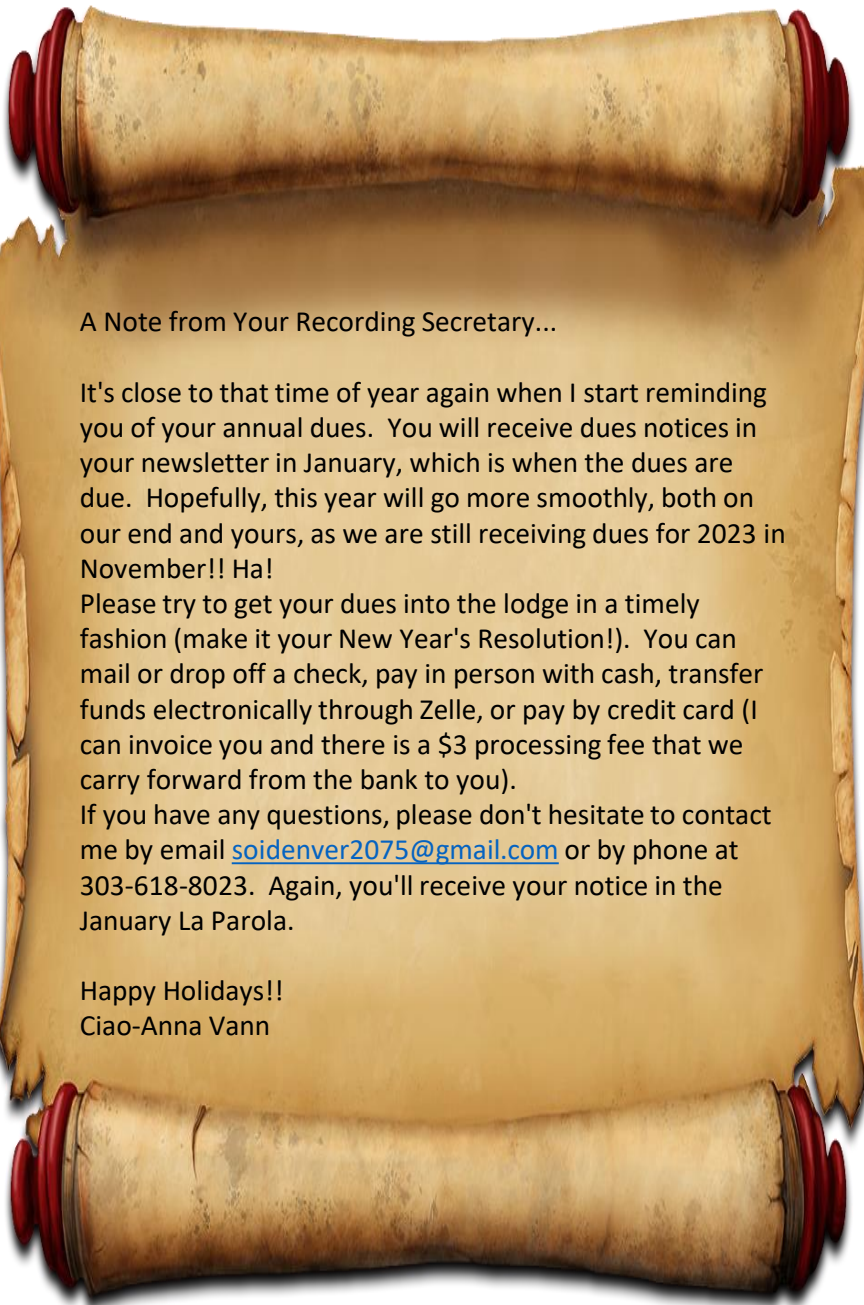
Just pronouncing this word brings salivation to the joys of eating this delicacy during the holiday season. This well-beloved dessert is a local favorite which still garners argument as to its origin. Italians as well as Slavs (BOJONS) make claim to the origination of this dessert. History says that this sweet bread came to us originally from Trieste, an Italian village and former Slovenian city in Italy. So, the Slavic people, living in Italy, actually were the originators of this delightfully dessert. The recipes for this treat arrived in the U.S. with the mothers, sisters, wives and grandparents who immigrated here. Today, we find potica in bakeries, farmers' markets, and coming from the home kitchen ovens of some of our residents. It is also offered in some holiday catalogs, commercially, but, trust me, it is a poor second to the home-made varieties.

For those unfamiliar with this delicacy, it is a thin, tightly rolled, light dough, filled with molasses, walnuts, cinnamon, and honey, would into a very tidy spiral and then baked to a golden brown. Delicious!!!

It is available at Vinnola's as well as Mauro Farms in Pueblo. Do yourself a favor and indulge in a tasty loaf of potica for Christmas.



Material provided by Pueblo Historical Society



### A Note from Your Recording Secretary...

It's close to that time of year again when I start reminding you of your annual dues. You will receive dues notices in your newsletter in January, which is when the dues are due. Hopefully, this year will go more smoothly, both on our end and yours, as we are still receiving dues for 2023 in November!! Ha!

Please try to get your dues into the lodge in a timely fashion (make it your New Year's Resolution!). You can mail or drop off a check, pay in person with cash, transfer funds electronically through Zelle, or pay by credit card (I can invoice you and there is a \$3 processing fee that we carry forward from the bank to you).

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me by email [soidenver2075@gmail.com](mailto:soidenver2075@gmail.com) or by phone at 303-618-8023. Again, you'll receive your notice in the January La Parola.

Happy Holidays!!  
Ciao-Anna Vann

### December General Meeting

Our December 20th meeting will once again be a social meeting.  
**No business**

Please bring a wrapped ornament for an ornament exchange between \$10 and \$20. Also, wear your favorite Christmas Sweater for a sweater contest. Not an ugly sweater but your most festive sweater. We will have Christmas music, singing, prizes and our 50/50 raffle. Dinner will start at 6:30 p.m. and it is our annual fish dinner.

**Hope to see you all there!**



January meeting will be a business meeting.

### Holiday Punch, from LeAnne DiTirro

Orange, cranberries, pomegranate seeds, cranberry juice, orange juice, pomegranate juice, lemon-lime soda, white rum, rosemary for garnish



You can mix everything except the soda & ice cubes.

You can also swap out the rum for Vodka!



## Here Come the Holidays!!!

By Ellie Gaccetta

Boy, didn't the pages rip off the calendar in record time this year? Seems like just yesterday we were celebrating the holidays and here they are again. Well, I have a news flash for you – it just seems like the period from Halloween to New Years is the holiday season. Let me enlighten you....here are some of the holidays that are celebrated in the US throughout the calendar year.

New Years Eve, Martin Luther King Day, Valentine's Day, President's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving Day, Veterans Day, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Earth Day, Arbor Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Graduations, Baptisms, First Communion and Confirmation, Bar Mitzvah, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Flag Day, Juneteenth, Halloween, Birthdays and Anniversaries, Pride Month, Black History Month, Women's History Month, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Italian Heritage Month and Hispanic Heritage Month. AND for all I know, I may have missed some since each culture has designated holidays. If I add Columbus Day, then I would need to add St. Joseph's Day, and the list goes on into perpetuity.

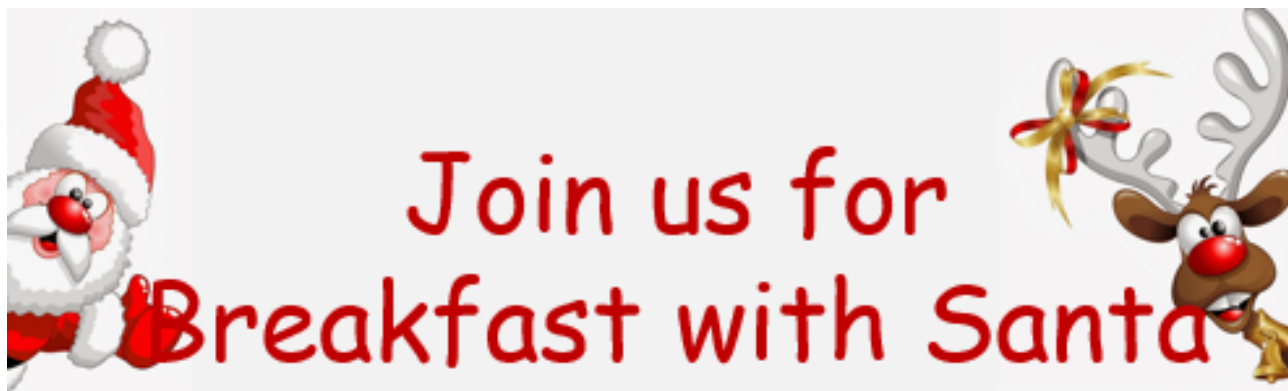
What does all that mean? It means that as a society we are always celebrating something or someone and hope we don't leave anyone feeling left out. There is no shortage of reasons to celebrate in the American culture. As a diverse nation we certainly are entitled to celebrate our diversity. I didn't include such times as Oktoberfest. But then I'd have to include the Great Beer Festival as well! What I hope doesn't happen is that people do not respect the individuality of other cultures and how they celebrate. If you don't like what is being celebrated, then don't participate and don't think it is cool to disrupt it.

For some time, businesses have been encouraged to have employees celebrate at work. Seriously, think Secret Santa, Holiday Celebrations, Christmas Bonus, Company Activity and Service Activity. Let me give you my fractured perspective on these. Secret Santa functions can either be fun or insulting if the person who gets your name is cheap, doesn't like you, or chooses not to participate. You know, like the guy who orders and eats lunch with the staff then has to go to the bathroom never to return to pay for his lunch....yes it happens. I have seen Secret Santa gifts that are beautiful, and people left in tears because they got nothing or something that was inappropriate and embarrassing. Office Holiday Celebrations can turn into events where someone's alternate ego appears, leaving everyone surprised. Although, it is always interesting to meet our co-worker's spouses! Conversely holiday functions can be boring as hell if the wrong person plans them. Christmas Bonus – I can't talk about this, I never got one in 40 years as a State or county employee. Company activity is where families gather in an informal manner at a park for a summer picnic. My experience is nobody is interested in meeting people in the workplace they don't know. Service activity is where the staff are encouraged to participate in a worthwhile community project. The problem is the same handful of people remember to mark them calendars. Please feel free to either agree or disagree, these are my opinions solely.

Have you noticed that holidays are a bit mixed and rushed in our retail industry. You can buy a Christmas tree and all the decorations at Hobby Lobby in July. By the time Christmas arrives the shelves are filled with Valentines and then the Easter Bunnies hop onto the shelves in February. Peeps seem to be available year-round if you look on the clearance rack. Greeting cards seem to be more within the season. However, I discovered that you need to rob a bank before buying a Hallmark birthday card today. The greeting card industry should be renamed the greedy card industry since they are no longer \$.99 but anywhere from \$4.99 to \$7.99 if you are going to a wedding or anniversary celebration.

Thankfully, we have text and Facebook to wish our friends well.

I'll just leave the holiday tribute here. From the bottom of my heart, I do wish you and your families a blessed Christmas and a prosperous, joyful and Happy New Year.



# Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Members who RSVP and have children or grandchildren 12 years old or younger will receive a gift from Santa.

Children 12 and under are FREE, but in the spirit of the holidays we request that each child bring book for a child the ages of infant to 12. The cost for all others is \$8. Breakfast will begin at 10:00 am and Santa will arrive shortly thereafter.

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren) 12 and under:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Those attending who are 13 or older:

\$8 X \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out this form and return it by December 1

Reservations are a must, check with reservation form for adults must be included

Please send in form and check to Pam Wright

7878 W. 62nd Place, Arvada, CO 80004

Contact information [pcake@comcast.net](mailto:pcake@comcast.net) or 303-210-6277

Checks made payable to "OSIA Denver Lodge #2075" MUST be included with reservations!

No reservations will be accepted after December 1, 2023. Thank you for your participation!

Santa has to make sure he has enough gifts and will be able to do any last-minute shopping.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you and your family!

*Childrens Party is on December 9th. If you haven't made a reservation, please do so by calling Pam 303-210-6277.*

*Please remember to have your child bring a new book which is age appropriate for his or her age. Books will be donated to Family Tree.*



**Braised Pork in the Black (Brasato di Maiale Nero ) serves 6-8, from our very own Kathy Holt**

- 1 (4-pound) pork loin, tied at regular intervals with butcher's twine
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 8 fresh sage leaves, chopped mixed with some olive oil
- 2 1/2 ounces pancetta
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/4 cup Italian flat parsley leaves
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup good plus 1 cup red wine
- 1 (28-ounce) can **Italian** San Marzano tomatoes and their juices, crushed
- Black pepper to taste



Preheat oven to 325. Season the pork with the salt, rubbing it into the meat. Make some slits in the pork and put in the sage leaf mixture. Set aside for 30 minutes. Mince together the pancetta, garlic and parsley to form a homogenous, smooth mixture in a small food processor or cut and mash together.

In a large, cast-iron casserole or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil and add the pork paste, cooking until it has melted into the oil. Place the pork in the pan and brown on all sides. Add 1 cup red wine and reduce by 3/4. Add the remaining cup of wine and the tomatoes, cover, and bring to a low simmer. Add pepper. Bake for 2 hours, until meat is fork tender, it should just simmer. The sauce around the edges turns black.-hence the name. Remove meat from casserole, allow to rest 15 minutes, covered with foil. Remove string.0 Serve in 1/3-inch-thick slices over spaghetti. Note: You have to use Italian tomatoes in Italian recipes, it makes such a difference! Boil the spaghetti until al dente, (reserve 1/2 c water in case the sauce needs thinning) drain the pasta and toss with a little bit of butter or olive oil then some parmesan cheese. Serve with pork and sauce. Pork is better the next day reheated.

**Real or Fake, by Cyndi Lubrano**

It's Holiday season and the dilemma is real (no pun intended) - Real or Fake - Christmas Tree that is. I've broken down the Pros and Cons for each to help with the decision of which is right of for your home.

**Advantages of Real Christmas Trees**

1. Real trees fill your home with that fresh fragrance of evergreen, a scent that can conjure up happy childhood memories.
2. Nearly all real Christmas trees sold in the United States are grown by American farmers, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).
3. Growing trees help clean the air we breathe and provide much-needed shelter for wildlife. When trees are cut down, more are planted in their place.

**Disadvantages of Real Christmas Trees**

1. Real trees are getting expensive. The average price in 2021 was \$78, according to the American Christmas Tree Association.
2. People with certain allergies will spend the holidays sneezing and wheezing if there's a real tree in the house.
3. Real trees need to be watered and often drop needles. Christmas trees can also harbor bugs and become a fire hazard if allowed to dry out.

**Advantages of Artificial Christmas Trees**

1. Convenience. Just set them up and they look just right, year after year. When the holidays are over, pack them back up for the next year.
2. Annual cost savings. Artificial trees last for years with no maintenance required.
3. Mess-free — no dropping needles, no watering, no bugs. Plus, you can get them in plenty of colors—including red!

**Disadvantages of Artificial Christmas Trees**

1. Artificial trees can't be recycled. Made from PVC, a petroleum-based non-biodegradable plastic, they're destined for landfills.
2. Most are made overseas.
3. They can be a fire hazard, too. There are several reports of pre-lit artificial trees catching fire, with the blaze starting in the firebox at the base.



# **Please Join Us at the Denver Lodge for These Events**

**December / Dicembre**

**December 2<sup>nd</sup>**, Adult Christmas Party

**December 9<sup>th</sup>**, Children's Breakfast with Santa (information enclosed)

**December 20<sup>th</sup>**, General Meeting (social meeting) Dinner at 6:30, events to follow!

# **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!**

**January / Gennaio**

**January 17<sup>th</sup>**, General Meeting, Dinner at 6:15, Meeting to follow

**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**



**Order Sons & Daughters of Italy  
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Denver, Colorado 80212**