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A Message From the President,

Antonio Meucci Lodge #213



March 2026

Issue 13

March is finally here, the days are getting a little longer, and Daylight Savings will begin on March 8th. This month will be one year since I took office as your President. I can't believe it. Seems like it was only yesterday. I need to personally thank everyone who has helped me on this journey. I couldn't have done it without my Brothers and Sisters, and as the saying goes the best is yet to come. March is often characterized by the proverb that it "*comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb*", hopefully that will be true as it goes for this cold weather and snow we have been having lately.

We started the month of February with a few successful events. First was the Super Bowl pool. I need to thank Brothers Joe Amato, John Rubillo, and Anthony Miceli for coordinating the Pools. Also a special thank you to all those who helped with selling the boxes like Brother Mario Cermele and for all those who bought boxes. The Lodge made a profit of \$1,250. Congratulations to all the winners. I know some of the people were ecstatic that they won some money.

On *February 13th*, the Lodge hosted a *Pasta/Tombola Night* with a touch of Valentines. It was a great event Chaired by Brothers Umberto Amato, Anthony Miceli, and Sister AnnaMaria Forte. I



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also need to thank Sister Pamela Danza and Brother Frank Autera for assisting in making this night so enjoyable for everyone. A very special thank you to Brother Anthony who made the pasta sauce using his homemade jars of sauce. No cans of red sauce that night. You definitely can taste the difference. Not only did we give out cash prizes when someone won Tombola, but we also had door prizes, raffles and every woman received a red chocolate rose. I'm happy to say the Lodge made a profit that night, and we also received a few applications for new members to join our ranks.

I encourage everyone to join us on *Saturday March 14th*, as the Lodge celebrates *San Giuseppe & St. Patrick's*. It will feature traditional Italian & Irish food, and Music by DJ Nando. The price is \$55 per person. So bring your family and friends for an enjoyable evening. Reservations can be made by calling Chairperson Sister Lina Amello 914 522-6488 or Sister Roselle Cucuzza 917 440-9946.

On *Saturday March 28th*, our Lodge will sponsor the Funny Bunny Easter Egg Hunt for children in White Plains, in conjunction with the City of White Plains Parks and Recreation Department. The Lodge will donate \$1,500 towards the event, and it's another way that we are giving back to the community of White Plains. Thank you Sister Caroline Baviello for coordinating this for our Lodge



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Back by popular demand is our *Pocketbook Bingo on April 24th*. As you may know this event is one of our biggest fundraiser for the Lodge, and it's already **“sold out”**. I can't believe how fast this event gets sold out. It should be a fun night for everyone, and I need to thank our Chairperson Cathy Grisanti and her committee for doing an exceptional job in coordinating this event.

Most recently, I sent out to the members regarding the NY State Grand Lodge Scholarship opportunities. There are great Scholarship opportunities for our children where they can apply for either Undergraduate, Graduate, Grant or Vocational-Trade Scholarships. You can view the criteria on the nysosdia.org website or our website antoniomeuccilodge.com. Deadline for applications is *March 31, 2026*.

I'm happy to announce that the *Antonio Meucci Lodge Scholarship Award* applications are now opened to receive applications. The Scholarships are available for both an Undergraduate or Graduate student to all our members Children and Grandchildren. I encourage our children to look into these opportunities and perhaps apply. The amount is \$1,500 you can possibly win towards your college education. You can visit our website antoniomeuccilodge.com. for the applications and criteria. Please note the *deadline is April 13, 2026*. I would like to thank Chairperson Sister Rita Maria Carolini for coordinating this for the Lodge. If anyone has any questions you can reach out to Sister Rita Maria Carolini on 914 656-4095.



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The CSJ is having an Essay contest called “*Discovering The Truth-The Louis J. Gallo Jr. Memorial Columbus Award*”. The contest is for students in grades 11-12 for all children of Lodge members in good standing. The student must select one of the many Anti-Columbus myths/falsehoods being repeated today and prove it wrong using reputable sources. Cash prizes will be awarded. I recently, sent out an email regarding the criteria. The information is also posted on our website antonioimeuccilodge.com. I encourage our young students to take advantage of this opportunity. You never know they just may be a winner. *The deadline is June 1, 2026*

Also congratulations to Brother Chris Famularo who was appointed as District IV liaison to the CSJ (Commission for Social Justice). Brother Chris will work along with Sister Eleanor Jobbagy Chairperson, and Co-Chair Mario Cermele of the CSJ on any issues that are derogatory against Italians . So if you “*see something, say something*” please forward the information to Brother Chris so he can pass it along so we can fight these injustices. His email is famularoc76@gmail.com

In case you are not aware The Christopher Columbus Statue destroyed in Baltimore, Maryland has been carefully restored,



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and President Trump made a decision to place it on the grounds of the White House. This is a meaningful show of support not only for our community, but for all who contributed to the founding and growth of our country. Thank you President Trump for continuing to counter the false and damaging narrative and affirms the importance of preserving our shared history that Italian-Americans have been fighting for these past few years.

The Grand Lodge is celebrating the 250th Anniversary of our great country by doing a video to celebrate the contributions and achievements of Italian-Americans. To honor our families who made that journey, or perhaps some of us who are first generation Italian-Americans they are looking for pictures that document that journey. The pictures will be documented into a video to be shown at the State Convention this year. So if you have a family photo of the family members that came here, even you, please send the photo (1 per family), along with the family name and the year, so they will combine them into a video. Photos must be **jpeg or pdf**. You then can send the photo to Joseph Ilardi at email ilardij@aol.com. *In the subject field put 2026 Convention Video*. I actually just found a picture of my husband Frank who emigrated from Italy at the age of 16, in 1955 from Montelone DiPuglia (Foggia) that I will be submitting. It could be fun to see our ancestors in the video.



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Also the Garibaldi Meucci Museum is having The Dollar Challenge. They are challenging **each and every** OSDIA member to contribute \$1.00 through their filial/subordinate Lodge for the Museums' upkeep. The museum is OUR OSDIA treasure and now OUR National Charity, and need the funds to help with the many repairs and maintenance needed on the building. Over the years our Lodge has always supported the museum because we felt an allegiance to it as it has our name associated to it. The challenge is where they are looking for a \$1.00 from every member of the Lodge. Since we have 341 members they are looking for at least \$341 or more. The Lodge winners will be those with the largest percentage of members contributing. The winning Lodge(s) name will be published in the *Italian American Magazine*, and a plaque with the Lodge names placed in the entry of the Museum. I have a canister that will be placed at our meetings where you can place your dollar. If at all possible can you assist in this contribution it will greatly be appreciated, and thank you to all that had already contributed. The *deadline is April 15th.*

Would you believe another new Lodge opened up in Georgia called Buoni Amici #3021 in Newman, Georgia. That's two new Lodges that opened in Georgia in a year. So if you are visiting Georgia you may want to stop in. The other Lodge in Georgia is Peachtree #3018 in Sandy Georgia.

The National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) has just announced that Sebastian Maniscalco as the first honoree of the



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NIAF 51st Anniversary Gala, taking place on October 17th, in Washington, DC. Sebastian is a proud son of Italian immigrants with roots to Cefalu, Sicily and Napoli in Campania. He is a record-breaking comedian who has led one of the highest-grossing comedy tours in history. If anyone has ever been to one of his shows you know just how funny he really is when he talks about growing up in an Italian family. Congratulations Sebastian.

Last month I mentioned about Cyclone Harry that tore through the East Cost of Sicily hitting the beautiful cities of Messina, Catania, Siracusa and a section of Santa Teresa di Riva leaving a track of destruction and water damage that was very devastating to watch. I just want you to know that the Antonio Meucci Lodge just sent \$1,000 to help Italy recover. If anyone would like to send a personal donation you can do so by making a check to the *Sons of Italy Foundation, 219 E Street NE, Washington, DC 2002*. In the *memo field put Cyclone Harry Relief*. For more than six decades, the Sons of Italy Foundation has answered the call when disaster strikes both in the United States and abroad. The Sons of Italy Foundation is actively working with the Italian Government to ensure that the funds reach the communities that need them the most.



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I would like to send Get Well wishes to all our members and friends not feeling well especially Sisters, Nina Maria Chillemi, Rita Cestone, Bettina DeFilippo, Margaret Forte, Vincenzia Puja, Teresa Rivero, Emelia Sclafani, Clara Sposato, Brothers Tony Amato, Lucio Gatti, John Pezzullo, Joseph Racioppo, and Vince Roselli. May you all experience good help real soon.

To all our members celebrating March Birthdays Buon Compleanno. I hope you all enjoy celebrating your Birthdays. Special birthday wishes to Sister Mara Persamipieri.

I would like to wish all our March couples a very Buon Anniversario. I hope everyone has a wonderful time celebrating your anniversaries, and your day is filled with Joy, Happiness, and most of all Love.

Sending Congratulation wishes to Thomas Tassone who recently graduated from the Westchester Fire Academy. Thomas will work for the White Plains Fire Department, and is the Grandson to Brother Mike Clarizio. I know you Nonno is very proud of your achievements.

Congratulations to Justin Amato on his recent engagement to Jessie. Justin is the Son of Brother Joe & Sister Toni- Marie Amato, and Grandson to Brother Tony & Sister Tina Amato, and the nephew to the Amato and Eglauf families. So happy for you guys.



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Also congratulations to Sister Vanessa Racci who transferred from the Lt. Joseph Petrosino Lodge in Little Italy. I know your parents Brother Joe & Sister Roseanne Racioppo are so proud you joined the Lodge. If you don't know, Vanessa is the Jazzy Italian Singer, and does lots of concerts around the country,

I am not sure some of you are aware but on March 14, 1891 there was a mass lynching in New Orleans of 11 Italian American immigrants, by a mob for their alleged role in the murder of Police Chief David Hennessy even after some of them had been acquitted at trial. It was the largest single mass lynching in American history. It took until 2019 when LaToya Cantrell, Mayor of New Orleans officially apologized to the Italian American community of New Orleans for these lynchings. Unfortunately, it doesn't bring the lives back for these 11 men, but it does set the record straight they had nothing to do with the murder.

In the month of March, Italy celebrates many notable religious holidays and festas. On March 8th, Festa Della Donna (International Women's Day) is celebrated. It's a vibrant occasion honoring women's achievements, solitary and their fight for equality, marked by gifting them yellow mimosas flowers.

On March 9th, it is the Feast day of St. Frances of Rome (Santa Francesca Romana). The City's co-patron Saint known as a



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model of mercy, a founder of the lay Benedictine order (Oblates of Mary), and the patron Saint of drivers, with special car blessings.

The Ides of March, known as Idus Martiae in Latin, which refers to the 15th day of March in the Roman calendar. In ancient Rome, the Ides were marked by religious observances and became notorious as the date of the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44BC, marking its date with the betrayal and ill-fortunate, famously cited “Beware the Ides of March” by Shakespeare. On March 17th Italy is known to celebrate the Anniversary of the Unification of Italy (Anniversario dell’Unita ’Italia) also know as the Day of National Unity, the Constitution, the Anthem, and the Flag. This holiday also commemorates the anniversary of the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861.

On March 19th, Italy celebrates Saint Joseph Day called Festa di San Giuseppe with Zeppole Pastries and Bonfires, and the early Spring Festa della Primavera. It’s also when Italy celebrates Father’s Day, as the husband of Mary and the earthly father of Jesus. Other notable events include the Palio dei Somari in Torrita di Siena, Tuscany which hosts donkey races on that day.

Saint Patrick’s Day is celebrated primarily in Northern Italy with a few localized festivals, and on March 25th, Italy celebrates The Annunciation which commemorates with religious events including a “procession of spinsters” in certain areas. Of course



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Italy hosts a lot of food festivals such as Taste in Florence showcasing Italian culinary excellence.

This year on March 29th, Palm Sunday is celebrated. This is the Christian moveable Feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter. The Feast commemorates Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

Last month, I mentioned about the Winter Olympics in the iconic San Siro Stadium in Milan-Cortina Italy. I have to say I was impressed with the venue in Italy and the events showcased in the Olympics. As predicted USA and the host country of Italy did quite well in the Olympics. Norway had the most medals, followed by USA and Italy. Italy actually won the most medals ever in the Winter Olympics. A special shout out to Francesca Lollobrigida, the great-niece to icon Gina Lollobrigida who won 2 Gold medals in speed skating. Francesca actually secured Italy's first Gold medal at the games. And to Ariana Fontana a skater who won her 14th Olympic medal, an all-time record that makes her the most decorated Italian athlete of all time. Congratulations to the USA Women's & Men's Hockey Teams who won Gold medals against Canada our arch rival. Sending congratulation wishes to all the athletes who did represent both our countries; we appreciate your commitment, hard work, and dedication to your sport.



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In closing, I want to mention that our *Italian Heritage Festival date has now been changed to July 26th*, because on the actual date we had planned we realized that the World Cup Soccer tournament was going to happen and we felt it was going to conflict with the Festa's attendance. More information to follow. To all our sports enthusiasts the month of March is also know as March Madness for Women & Men's NCAA Basketball Tournaments, and Spring Training for Baseball has already begun. All signs that Spring will arrive soon. Also as a fun fact in case you didn't know but the month of March is know for National Sauce and National Noodle month. So it's ok to add more sauce to your pasta this month, and not feel guilty about it.

To all my Brothers and Sisters may you always remember our motto **Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.**

Sempre Avanti,
President Camille