



AMHS

# NOTIZIARIO

CELEBRATING ITALIAN CULTURE &amp; COMMUNITY SINCE 2000

A Publication of the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society of the Washington DC Area

September/October 2021



Maria Centracchio of Molise celebrates her bronze medal in judo at the Olympics.

Photo from Maria Centracchio's Facebook page

## From Calcio to the Olympics, Athletes Raise Italian Spirits *Molisana Wins Historic Olympic Medal*

By Carmine James Spellane

**A**t this time last year, Italy was reeling from the effects of COVID-19 as one of the hardest hit countries in the world. The sting of lost lives, strained health care resources and social isolation took a fearful toll on the Italian spirit.

But that spirit, embodied in the people of Italy and the descendants of Italian immigrants to countries around the globe, was never broken. In September 2021, sports have given all of us a common rallying point to warm our hearts and souls. You do not have to be a sports fan to appreciate the thrill of seeing young men and women push themselves to the limit while representing their country and their culture, our shared culture.

*continued on 14*

### What's Inside

- 02 President's Message
- 03 Expert Will Discuss U.S. Capitol's Italian Connection
- 03 AMHS Nominating Committee
- 03 Carla Gambescia Presentation Rescheduled
- 04 Scholarship Winners
- 05 'American Pie' Singer's Italian Roots
- 08 Siamo Una Famiglia
- 09 Italian-Americans Pronunciation Data
- 10 Avezzano
- 12 Larino
- 16 New U.S. Postal Bocce Stamp



## AMHS NOTIZIARIO

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



### Dear members and friends:

By the time this message gets to you, most of the summer will be behind us and fall will be fast approaching. What is still not behind us, unfortunately, is the pandemic. Our conversations continue to be sprinkled with references to phrases such as “delta variant, breakthrough infection and booster shots,” once the preserve of professionals in the health field. So, as another season rolls by, we are still waiting for the day when the virus is truly in our rear view mirror.

Although the pandemic is still a significant problem, you may have felt at least a temporary return to normalcy if you attended our recent Ferragosto picnic, our first live event in over 17 months. It took place on August 15 at the Ben Brenman Park in Alexandria, Virginia, and was co-sponsored by your society and the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center (CISC). The event was a great success. We had an outstanding turnout, perhaps our best ever. The weather cooperated and everyone appeared to be enjoying themselves with good food and drink, music, volleyball, bocce ball, and more than enough fellowship to go around. In short, the day offered a great opportunity for members and friends of the AMHS and the CISC to reconnect physically, enjoy an outdoor picnic, make new friends and renew acquaintances. We are grateful for the CISC’s co-sponsorship of the event, and we hope that it marks the beginning of a close collaboration — even partnership — in the years ahead.

Speaking of the future, we are pleased to remind you that our first in-person general meeting of 2021 will occur on October 3 at the CISC. Our guest speaker will be Steve Livengood, the Chief Visitor Guide of the U.S. Historical Society. Mr. Livengood is an excellent speaker and so we should be entertained while learning about the Italian connection to the Capitol. You can learn more about the event in the article by Nancy DeSanti (First Vice President-Programs) that appears later in this newsletter. Don’t forget to mark your calendar for the event.

While you have your calendar out, you should also mark the date of November 28. That’s the day when our annual wine tasting event resumes this year, again at the CISC. This fun get-together is always one of our most popular events and should be especially enjoyable because we were unable to hold it physically last year due to the pandemic. Stay tuned for additional details.

In the meantime, enjoy the cooler weather, the changing colors of the leaves, apple picking and all the other treats brought to us by the fall season.

Regards,  
Ray LaVerghetta

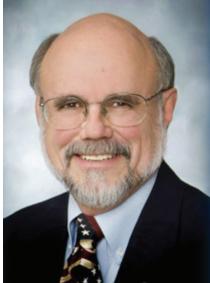
### Give the Gift of MEMBERSHIP!

For details visit **Become a Member** on [www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org](http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org).

# Expert Will Discuss U.S. Capitol's Italian Connection at Next Meeting

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs

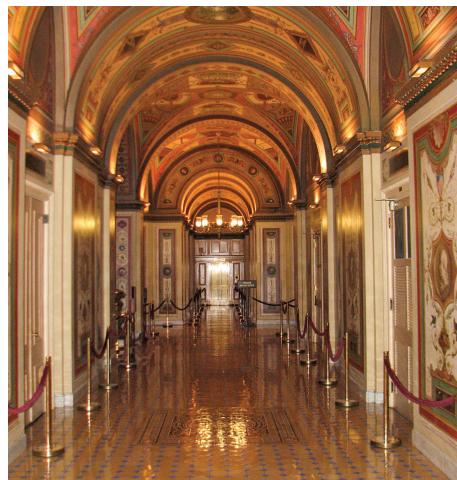
We are pleased to announce that for our first in-person general meeting in over a year, our speaker will be Steven Livengood, the Director of Public Programs at the United States Capitol Historical Society. The luncheon meeting will be held at Casa Italiana on Sunday, October 3, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.



*Steven Livengood*

Steve is also Chief Visitor Guide to the U.S. Capitol who gives the VIP tours. He was a mentor to our late AMHS member Joe Grano, who as our members may recall, was a driving force behind getting the Congressional Gold Medal for Constantino Brumidi, the "Michelangelo of the Capitol." Steve is an expert on Brumidi, and he noted that during the quarantine, he developed a new PowerPoint presentation that will make its debut at our meeting. He will also describe to us the many Italian connections to the Capitol.

We are certain his talk will be interesting and informative, so please come and bring your family and friends. There will be a catered lunch by Fontina Grille along with some wonderful raffle prizes. This event is coordinated with the Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center and the Italian American Museum of Washington, D.C. Reservations are due by September 28, 2021, and space may be limited, so please reserve early. For more information, see page 15. ■



*The corridors of the U.S. Capitol designed by Constantino Brumidi.* Credit: US Capitol Historical Society

## From the AMHS Nominating Committee

Submitted by Maria Ann D'Andrea on behalf of the committee

**O**n November 28, at the general membership meeting, the Society will hold elections for the positions of President, 1st and 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and three members of the Board. The committee is pleased to report that the five current officers have agreed to serve another 2-year term: Ray LaVerghetta, President; Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs; Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President-Membership; Carmine James Spellane, Secretary, and Peter Bell, Treasurer.

The three members of the Board whose term expires at the end of this year are Andrea Balzano, Alfred Del Grosso and Helina (Ellie) Zewdu Nega. The committee is pleased to report that we have found two candidates who have agreed to serve on the Board: Rico Allegrino and Julia Paola, a senior at George Washington University and past recipient of an AMHS scholarship. The bios for these candidates will be provided in the November-December issue of the **AMHS Notiziario**. Board members serve for a three-year term.

While we are pleased to announce the candidates, above, ***we need your help!*** The nominating committee is looking for a third candidate to serve on the Board. If you are interested in volunteering your time to help with the operations of our dynamic Society — and to have fun in the process — please contact Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, [uva051985@comcast.net](mailto:uva051985@comcast.net), (703) 473-4033; or Lynn Sorbara, [drlynnyrose@yahoo.com](mailto:drlynnyrose@yahoo.com), (301) 466-2556. The members of the Nominating Committee are Rico Allegrino, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, and Lynn Sorbara. ■

## CARLA GAMBESCA PRESENTATION RESCHEDULED

By Nancy DeSanti, 1st Vice President-Programs

**W**hen Casa Italiana shut down in March 2020 due to the pandemic, we were already scheduled to have a talk later that month by author and Italian cultural expert Carla Gambescia. So now we are instead planning a luncheon meeting with Carla as our speaker in March 2022 — two years later.

She will tell us about her new book which is scheduled to be published in September, and we may well hear about her fabulous trip to Italy. This August she finished leading a hiking and biking trip through Northern Italy (she has hiked and biked in all 20 regions of Italy). A trip to Southern Italy is planned for this September. Carla, whose father's family is from Sulmona in Abruzzo, is enthusiastic about sharing her love of art, culture and basically all things Italian. So if you wish to receive her wonderful "Postcards from the Boot" e-mails, you can sign up at <https://postcardsfromthe-boot.com/subscribe-to-postcards-from-the-boot>. Meanwhile, stay tuned for further details about our programs in 2022. ■



*A garden in Isola Bella overlooking Lago Maggiore.*

Photo by Carla Gambescia



## Meet This Year's SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Naomi Lebowitz & Cora Williams

By Ray LaVerghetta, Scholarship Committee Chair

**A**s with many organizations, we in the AMHS have had to do many things differently over the course of 2020 and 2021. One area of our operations, however, that remained exactly the same was our scholarship program.

Both in the previous academic year and in the current one, the AMHS Scholarship Committee was able to select two outstanding students for awards. Each year the AMHS grants a \$4,000 scholarship to two students who have demonstrated academic excellence and a strong interest in the Italian language and culture.

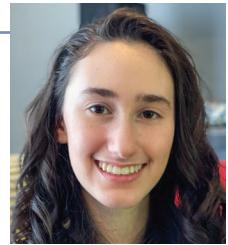
This year's winners are Naomi Lebowitz and Cora Williams. Both students are recent graduates of Annapolis High School. Ms. Lebowitz graduated second in her class and plans to study neuropsychology and art history, with emphasis on the Italian Renaissance, at Columbia University's Barnard College. She began her study of the Italian language and culture in middle school and continued perfecting it through high school. Ms. Williams also excelled in high school, graduating in the top 5 percent of her class. She too started studying Italian in middle school and pursued it throughout her high school career. She will study social service at Belmont University.

Both students have written a letter of thanks to the Society for their awards. We reproduce them to the right, along with their photographs.

### Naomi Lebowitz

Dear members of the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society,

I am honored to have been selected as a recipient of the AMHS scholarship for the 2021-2022 academic year. Both the financial support afforded to me through this generous scholarship and the intellectual support of a community dedicated to preserving Italian heritage will undoubtedly propel me further in my studies of neuroscience and art history at Barnard College this fall.



Though I am not Italian by heredity, some of the first words I comprehended as a child were in my father's *Napolitan* – the Southern Italian dialect he picked up after years of working in a Long Island Italian restaurant. He passed his love of regional Italian cuisines and brash, energetic dialect to me. My affinity for Italian culture coexists with my own Ashkenazi Jewish heritage. I have a deep appreciation for the legacy of the vibrant Italian-Jewish community, the *Italkim*. Though I cannot trace any ancestry back to the Jews of Ancient Rome or even 20th century *Italkim*, my study of Italian language and culture over the past seven years has brought me closer to my Italian coreligionists, spiritually and intellectually.

I was fortunate to begin studying the Italian language in sixth grade. My last two years taking Italian in the International Baccalaureate Program, however, granted me an opportunity like no other to dive into Italian culture, history, and contemporary society in the very language spoken in Italy today. It was this experience which led me to pursue a minor in art history next year with an emphasis on Italian Renaissance art and architecture. My appreciation for Italian language and culture also extends to my passion for neuroscience. I see tremendous value in following the lead of great Italian figures of the Renaissance and connecting the lived human experience – our emotions, sensory perceptions, instincts – to our evolving understanding of the mind. Combining my love of art history with my passion for neuroscience, I ultimately hope to advance society's understanding of *la cosa rossa* ("the pink thing"). I am confident the AMHS scholarship will help me do just that.

It is with my deepest gratitude that I accept this honor from the Abruzzo and Molise Heritage Society and look forward to continued engagement with the organization and Italian culture.

Grazie mille,  
Naomi Lebowitz

### Cora Williams



Dear members of the Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society:

My name is Cora Williams and I am one of the recipients of the AMHS Scholarship for the 2021-22 academic year. I am incredibly honored to receive this award based on my academic accomplishments as well as my dedication to the Italian language over the past 7 years. I would like to offer many thanks to the AMHS community for helping me to continue both my education for the next four years at Belmont University and my ongoing study of the Italian language and culture.

Over my three years in middle school and four years in high school, I took Italian classes where we studied the language, the culture, and Italy as a whole. During my studies, I began conversations with family members discussing our own Italian roots. My mother was adopted, so as she learned about her own heritage, I was able to do research into the regions of Italy to which she could trace her ancestors.

This fall, I will attend school in Nashville at Belmont University, where I will be majoring in Social Work. I hope to also take courses that will give me a deeper understanding of Italian culture, and eventually study abroad in Italy, where I will have the opportunity to use all of the skills I have learned.

Through this scholarship, the AMHS community has given me opportunities that I couldn't have dreamed of. I will be able to focus purely on my studies, while continuing to deepen my understanding of the Italian language and culture. I am extremely grateful for this award, and I express my gratitude to the entire AMHS community.

Grazie,  
Cora Williams

# 'American Pie' Singer's Italian Roots

By Joseph "Sonny" Scafetta, Jr.

**D**onald McLean III was born in New Rochelle, New York, on October 2, 1945. His father was Donald McLean Jr., of Scottish Protestant descent. His mother was Elizabeth Bucci, a Roman Catholic whose parents had emigrated from the region of Abruzzo, Italy. Don went with his parents after every Sunday Mass to the home of his maternal grandparents in Port Chester, New York, for an Italian dinner. He developed an interest in music by listening to Italian opera there. When Don was 12, he took voice lessons from an Italian opera teacher who taught him breath control and tone support, so he never screamed like most male rock stars. He also studied an Italian song style known as Belafonte Singing.

After his father died when Don was 15, the boy dropped the use of III from his name. He then bought his first guitar at age 16. Don graduated from the Iona Preparatory School in June 1963 and he went to Villanova University in Pennsylvania. After one semester, he moved back home to New Rochelle to attend Iona College from which he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration in June 1968.

After graduation, Don married Carol Sauvion in her home town of Philadelphia in early 1969. He then began in earnest to pursue a career as a singer and a song writer. After writing, singing, and recording the songs for an album that he called *Tapestry* in 1969 in Berkeley, California, he presented it to 72 different record producers. All rejected it before a new label called Media Arts decided to take a chance on him and released it in 1970. It attracted good reviews, but little notice outside the folk community. Media Arts was soon taken over by United Artists Records. Meanwhile, Don was writing and singing the songs for a second album which he called *American Pie*. The title song was recorded on May 26, 1971, and received its first radio air play in New York City a month later. On January 15, 1972, it reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 and remains his most successful release. With a total running time of eight minutes and 36 seconds, "American Pie" is the longest song to reach number one. Listeners were intrigued by its cryptic lyrics. Many disc jockeys tried to unravel their meaning, but Don declined to say anything definitive about them at that time. He released his third album named simply *Don McLean* later in 1972. The most popular single on the album was *Vincent* which was a tribute to the Dutch painter Vincent Van Gogh (1853-



Don McLean in a publicity photo from 1976.

Credit: Wikipedia



Don McLean in 2018.

Credit: Wikipedia

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*Don developed an interest in music while listening to opera at the home of his maternal grandparents.*

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1890). In 1973 Don released his fourth album *Playing Favorites* and in 1974 he released his fifth album *Homeless Brother*. It was his final studio recording for United Artists Records. In 1976 he and his wife divorced. They had no children.

Starting in 1977 and continuing for the next 43 years, Don released 17 more albums. They included several well-known songs such as "And I Love You So," "Castles in the Air," "Wonderful Baby," "Superman's Ghost," and "The Grave". Although Don's subsequent albums did not match the commercial success of his first three, he became a major concert attraction in the United States and abroad. In 1987, Don married Patricia Shnier of Montreal, Quebec, Canada. They have two children and two grandchildren.

Over the course of his career, Don has received many honors. His alma mater, Iona College, conferred an honorary doctorate on him in 2001. In February 2002, *American Pie* was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame. In 2004, Don was inducted into the Song Writers Hall of Fame. His authorized biography, *The Don McLean Story: Killing Us Softly With His Songs*, was published in 2007. In February 2012, he received the British Broadcasting Radio to Folk Life Achievement Award. In March 2012, the Public Broadcasting

System showed a feature-length documentary called *Don McLean: American Troubadour*.

In 2016 Don and his second wife divorced after 29 years of marriage. Subsequently, he set up the Don McLean Foundation as a charity funded by all of his income in perpetuity. He also established a nature preserve at his Lakeview Estate in Camden, Maine, where he now lives alone. In a recent interview with Italian America Magazine about Abruzzo, he said: "I did go to Italy a few years ago and had the best time. I would love to go back again." When asked about Italian dishes, he added: "Yesterday, I made spaghetti and meatballs myself. I did a great job; it really tasted delicious. I especially like mussels with marinara sauce." So, it sounds like Don is finally returning to the Italian roots of his youth at 75 years of age.

## Sources:

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don\\_McLean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don_McLean),  
accessed May 16, 2021.

Vincent Van Gogh, The Columbia Encyclopedia, 5th edition, at page 2859, Houghton Mifflin Publishing Co., 1993.

"Piacere! Pleased to Meet You, Don", Italian America Magazine, at page 36 (Spring 2021).



# SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

**(Editor's Note — Our news items for this issue truly embody the name of this regular feature, covering life events from the joyous to the sorrowful. We are family.)**

## Omero Sabatini Celebrates 90<sup>TH</sup> Birthday in Style

**A** good time was had by all" can truly be said about the party for our AMHS Past President Omero Sabatini who celebrated his 90th birthday in style on June 26, 2021.

The party was outdoors in the back yard of his home in Alexandria, under a huge tent. The weather was beautiful, and everyone enjoyed a wonderful dinner catered by Aldo's of Alexandria.

The party was attended by family members of Omero and his wife Belinda, including Omero's daughter Maria, who flew in from California, and his nephew Mike DeBonis who came with his wife Dena, his parents Tony and Sheila and his two kids, Rosie and George. Several of Belinda's family members came down from Baltimore.

Many of Omero's friends attended as well, including some who had not seen each other in over a year due to the pandemic. Among the friends celebrating with Omero were Lucio and Edvige D'Andrea, Maria D'Andrea-Yothers and Sam Yothers, Nancy DeSanti, Ennio DiTullio, Kirsten Keppel, Joe and Joann Novello, Dora Leo Santacroce, Roberto Severino, Lynn Sorbara and Lourdes Tinajero.

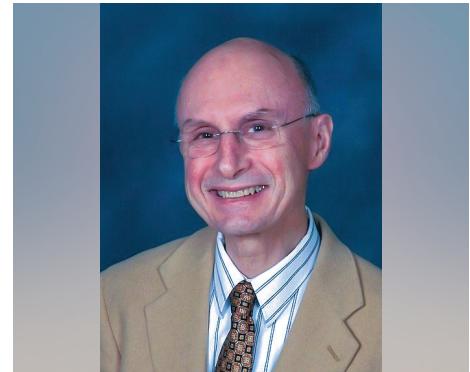
A special guest was Father Andrei Zanon from Holy Rosary Church, who led the prayer before the meal and who kept an eye on the score of the Euro 2020 soccer game between Italy and Belgium. When Italy won, Father Andrei stood up and announced the score and there was loud cheering from the crowd, with none cheering louder than Ennio. Maybe that was because he used to play soccer himself, and in fact he met his late wife Emma when she came to the Holy Rosary soccer games.

Kirsten led the partygoers in singing "Vola, Vola, Vola," the popular Abruzzese song. Kirsten passed out sheets with the words to the song, but it turned out that she did not need one herself — she had memorized the words.

Towards the end of the event, Omero thanked everyone for coming and gave special thanks to his wife Belinda. Then Dora sang to Omero, the beautiful Neapolitan song 'Na sera 'e maggio. It was truly a day to remember. ■



Kirsten Keppel (standing left) serenades Omero Sabatini (center in red checkered vest) at his 90th birthday celebration.



Jeffrey Petrino

## Jeffrey Petrino Mourned

**A** MHS sends its sincerest condolences to Mary Petrino on the passing of her beloved husband, Jeffrey Peter Francis Petrino, on July 15, 2021 at his home in Alexandria, Va. He suffered from complications related to Alzheimer's Disease. Mary and Jeff are long-time members of AMHS. Jeff was born in Trenton, New Jersey, the eldest child of Peter Francis and Geraldine Catherine (Lamsbach) Petrino. Jeffrey is survived by his wife, Mary, with whom he had one beloved daughter, Julia Kenney Teresa Petrino (1984 - 1999) who predeceased him from complications of Hodgkins Lymphoma. (Source: Demaine Funeral Home). Rest in peace. ■

## Stories Stir Memories of Baltimore

**A** MHS Board member Frank Bonsiero was moved by the recent series of articles in the past three issues of the *Notiziario* on "The Political Talented D'Alesandro Family." Frank shared these memories:

"From three years of age until I was almost eight years old, I was raised in an Italian orphanage one block immediately across the street from the Little Italy neighborhood in Baltimore. The orphanage, St. Leo's, was attached to a Catholic Church through a second-story walkway. The church, St. Vincent de Paul, is still there. The orphanage is now a small park for toddlers. We

were raised by the Pallottine nuns, who spoke Italian to each other, or whenever not speaking to the kids. (I have no horror stories about these nuns; I loved them!) This all circa 1952-1956. I am 72 now.

"The parish school was across the street from the orphanage; two blocks further in the same direction was President's Street and the D'Alessandro residence. So while there was a 7-8 year age difference, Nancy Pelosi and I went to the same parochial school. There are always fond memories whenever I hear the name D'Alessandro or Pelosi!"

## Anniversary Wishes from Rome



Gianni Dal Forno and Marzia Greco send anniversary greetings from Rome to Corrado and Julie Dal Forno.

As AMHS members Julie and Corrado Dal Forno were celebrating their 22nd wedding anniversary on August 7, 2021, they had an unexpected surprise. They were remembered by Corrado's parents, Marzia Greco and Gianni Dal Forno, who live in Rome and who sent them a photo with a sign they had made and flowers purchased for the occasion, since they could not travel here. Some AMHS members may recall meeting Marzia and Gianni when they visited.

## D'Andreas Celebrate 62 Years of Marriage

On June 27, AMHS President Emeritus Lucio D'Andrea, and his wife Edvige, celebrated 62 years of wedded bliss. They day started with the 10 a.m. Mass at Holy Rosary Church, where Father Andrei Zanon called them to the altar, before the end of Mass, to bestow a blessing. All in attendance cheered for this wonderful milestone. Afterwards, Lucio and Edvige were taken out for a dinner celebration at A Modo Mio (formerly Joe's Place) on Lee Highway in Arlington, Va. Lucio and Edvige were joined by their daughter Maria, their grandson Tyler, and AMHS members Luciana Caleb and Albert Palantonio. Buona fortuna, Lucio and Edvige. Here's to many more years of wedded happiness.



Joining Edvige and Lucio D'Andrea (4th and 5th from left) at their 62nd anniversary celebration were: (from left) son-in-law Sam Yothers, Luciana Caleb, daughter Maria D'Andrea-Yothers, grandson Tyler and Albert Palantonio.

## Anniversary Rainbows and Smiles



AMHS Board member and contributing writer Joseph "Sonny" Scafetta, Jr. and his wife Teri celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary on July 4 at Long Beach Island, on the New Jersey shore. The sky provided a beautiful backdrop for their happy day.



# SIAMO UNA FAMIGLIA

## Welcome, Domenico



AMHS member Maria Marigliano on the day of the birth of her new grandson, Domenico Marigliano, born in July 2021. Maria is the organist and director of liturgy and music for Holy Rosary Church. Baby Domenico made his first visit to the church on August 1, where he was blessed by Father Andrei Zanon in the presence of his proud parents and great-grandmother Carmela Ventresca, who is also an AMHS member.

## AMHS Membership

By Lynn Sorbara, 2nd Vice President, Membership

### NEW MEMBERS

*A warm welcome* is extended to: Rosaria McCluer, Joseph Scafetta III, Teresa Talierco Scafetta, and Cara Cavicchia Walker.

### BIRTHDAYS

#### Compleanni a Settembre

Mary Ellen Allegrino and Bruno Fusco, September 2; Richard DiBuono, and Elissa Irene Padula Sobolewski, September 3; Anthony Phillips, September 4; Sharon Callahan, and Lina Marinucci, September 5; Corrado Dal Forno, September 6; Barbara Verdile, Richard Stonestreet, and Maria Marigliano, September 8; Phillip Contrino, September 10; Rose Napolitano, September 18; Theresa Duncan and John Paolantonio, September 19; Joan Piccariello, September 22; Robert Verdile, September 25; Olimpia Micheli and Fr. Ezio Marchetto, September 27; Jeffrey Clark, Romeo Sabatini, and Maria LaVerghetta, September 29.

#### Compleanni a Ottobre

Eugene Robert Giammittorio, October 4; Elizabeth DiGregorio, Charlie Iovino, and Kirsten Keppel, October 8; Gianluca Nigro, October 10; John Fusciello, October 11; Irena DiCarlantonio, October 12; Guy Caruso, October 21; Sarah Scott, October 22; Antonietta McDonald and Louis Alfano, October 26; Thomas Stallone, October 27; Joseph Scafetta III, October 28; and Teresa Forcina, October 29.

### ANNIVERSARIES

#### Anniversari a Settembre

Teresa & Gianpiero Forcina; and Sergio & Maria Fresco, September 3; John & Lucille Fusciello, September 13; and Matthew & Amelia DiFiore, September 16.

#### Anniversari a Ottobre

Joseph & Mary Katherine Theis and John & Eileen Verna, October 3; Frank Charles & Susan Ann Bonsiero, October 6; Aldo & Louie Anne D'Ottavio, October 8; Rocco Del Monaco & Eileen Parise, October 9; Alfred & Diana DelGrosso, October 14; Joseph & Rose Ruzzi Sr., October 19; Michael & Antonietta McDonald, October 28; and Salvatore & Anna Maria DiPilla, October 30.

## THIS IS YOUR NOTIZIARIO

By Carmine James Spellane, Editor

*The Notiziario belongs to all of us, and we want to hear from you.*

The AMHS is much more than just its meetings. We are a vibrant society of people who care about their heritage and want to learn more. And all of us have stories to tell. We encourage you to submit articles for the newsletter to tell your story. It could be about a recent trip to Italy, honors received by you or your family, milestones such as significant birthdays or anniversaries, reviews of books on Italian topics, or recipes, to name but a few ideas.

All articles can be emailed to [abruzzomoliseheritagesociety@gmail.com](mailto:abruzzomoliseheritagesociety@gmail.com) to my attention. As editor, I will carefully review each submission and edit as needed. Please understand that publication of any article is subject to space available and the appropriate nature of the content, but we will make every effort to use your work and photos.

The AMHS is making new efforts to engage our current members and add more to our ranks. A vibrant Notiziario is part of that. As our society approaches its 21st anniversary, let's all help ensure a bright future for our mission to celebrate "all things Italian."

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Category	# of Persons
Associate (Couple)	5 X 2 = 10
Associate (Individual)	39
General (Couple)	47 X 2 = 94
General (Individual)	89
Honorary	11
Scholarship	2
Student	8
<b>Total Membership:</b>	<b>253</b>

# Linguistics Research of Italian Americans Yields Pronunciation Data

by Romeo Sabatini

In perusing through papers left by my sister Agnes who died recently (see the May/June 2021 *Notiziario*, page 8), I found notes on research she did, awakening my interest in linguistics developed when, as a teenager, I struggled to master English pronunciation. The research included data I gathered by audio-interviewing Italian Americans in our own community. In the 1980s, when my sister Agnes was doing graduate work in linguistics at Queens College in New York, she asked my help in a study that involved interviewing speakers of English whose native language was Italian. I gladly volunteered to help and, following her protocols, I recorded the voices of many subjects in our Italian-American community, some of whom may still be alive and members of our Society today.

In particular, the research examined the pronunciation by Italians, of certain phonemes (speech sounds) which are nonexistent in the Italian Language. Based on her own experience (like me, she came to the U.S. at an early age) and some research she had already done, she chose four phonemes which are particularly troublesome to Italians : **th** as in *thin, truth*; **th** as in *that, then*; **h** as in *he, ahead*; and **i** as in *is, hit*. The responses were analyzed according to the respondent's age of entry to the U.S., area of residence (New York and Washington areas), education, and sex of respondent. Here, I will briefly summarize her results and main conclusions.

First, and certainly obvious, the younger the age one is exposed to English as a second language, the lesser the errors in pronunciation. There are physiological (brain and speech organs development) and cultural factors (education, motivation) that control the learning of language, especially pronunciation. But I won't dwell on these factors in this short summary of my sister's research, I'm not a linguist; those interested can research the topic on the internet using Google or Yahoo, with keywords such as English pronunciation, linguistics, etc.

The second conclusion obtained from the statistical analysis was that education — the major cultural factor — is a very strong factor in mastering pronunciation and that the people with more education tend to have better pronunciation scores. This was most evident when data from the Washington area was separated and compared with the New York data. The Washington area data I gathered for my sister was

(inadvertently) biased toward higher education, as 85% of the subjects I interviewed had attended college, compared to only 7% for the New York subjects. Also, one of the characteristics of the New York accent is to substitute **T** or **D** for **TH** (*those* becomes *doze, three* becomes *tree*) just as it often happens to an Italian speaking English. So this too may have obfuscated the results and caused a lower pronunciation score for the New York group.

The research showed slightly higher scores for female subjects, but the difference from male scores was statistically insignificant, most probably because of insufficient data.

Of the four phonemes, the **TH** (as in *that*) turned out to be the most incorrectly pronounced, while the **i** (as in *is*) had the least error. Yes, I can remember how much I practiced putting my tongue between my teeth to blow out a correct **TH**, as my 9th grade English teacher suggested I do. Thank you, Mrs. Kirby — I think I finally mastered that fastidious **TH**.

How young must an Italian be when first exposed to English in order not to retain a foreign accent? The question came up during this research. But the question cannot be answered fully without considering the educational opportunities available to the subject. As this and other research show, education is the greatest attenuator of a foreign accent. I may add from my own experience that this requires specific efforts in vocal exercises, which may not be available in today's public school system. From my experience and observation, a native Italian



must be not older than 13 when first exposed to English, in order to easily and completely eliminate the foreign accent, provided he/she has the correct coaching available in school. In conclusion, with practice and the correct coaching a native of Italy can improve his/her English pronunciation at any age.

After her master's degree in Linguistics and Education, my sister went on to teach English as a Foreign Language in the New York Public School system — a program which was not available when she and I attended NY public schools in the 1950s.

A search for "English pronunciation for Italians" on YouTube yielded innumerable videos. I'm listing a few below:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz6v8q5Hvzc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz6v8q5Hvzc)  
(Corso di Inglese Video Gratis — Lezione 1 — Free English lessons sponsored by La Repubblica)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=lRPZyuXuzmY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lRPZyuXuzmY)  
(pronunciation skills: English for Italians)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU56Q36IV5U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU56Q36IV5U)  
(British English- English accent tips for Italians)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4NVPg2kHv4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4NVPg2kHv4)  
(International phonetic alphabet to learn English pronunciation)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Y9EZcw5zaA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Y9EZcw5zaA)  
(Pronuncia inglese per Italiani)



# AVEZZANO

PROVINCE OF L'AQUILA, REGION OF ABRUZZO

By Nancy DeSanti

The city of Avezzano, in the province of L'Aquila, is close to the town of Ortecchio, which was profiled in the July/August *Notiziario* and which is famous for its proximity to the Fucino Space Centre, the largest satellite control center in the world. Avezzano has 41,000 inhabitants, known as Avezzanesi, and is located 53 kilometers from L'Aquila and 60 kilometers from Rome.

The city traces its origins as an existing urban center to the ninth century. Now it is the second most populous municipality in the province and the sixth in the region. It is the main commercial, industrial and agricultural center of the Marsica area, with nearby important high-tech industries and a large Telespazio satellite farm of the Fucino Space Centre.

The city's name is derived from "Ave Jane," an invocation to the Roman god Janus, and from "Ad Vetianum" which means "to the Vetia family," domiciled in the nearby town of Alba Fucens. The first settlements in this area began with the construction works for the lake's drainage ordered by Emperor Claudius in the 1st century A.D. The territory shows traces of the first attempts to drain the unhealthy basin, where the remains of Roman walls still exist along a riverbed.

In the 15th century, Avezzano was under the dominion of Gentile Virgilio Orsini, who built a castle in 1490. In the late 19th and early 20th century, after the draining of Lake Fucino, Avezzano underwent terrific growth, but unfortunately it was completely destroyed in a devastating earthquake on the morning of January 13, 1915 — one of the worst earthquakes in the recorded history of Italy. Avezzano was the epicenter of the earthquake and only Casa dei Palazzi and a wing of Castle Orsini were spared.

The city was literally toppled from the shaking and only one high-rise building survived. The earthquake, which measured 6.7 on the Richter scale, caused widespread damage over a large area of central and southern Italy. In Rome, St John's Lateran reported one fallen statue and there were even cracks in the Column of Marcus Aurelius.



Castello Orsini Colonna

Credit: Wikipedia

Following the 1915 earthquake, the city was completely rebuilt along straight, parallel streets, with wide green areas and fine villas.

During World Wars I and II, a concentration camp was located near the city, where foreign prisoners of war were interned. More destruction was caused by air bombings in 1944. Avezzano was severely damaged and then rebuilt after the 1944 Allied bombing.

Visitors to Avezzano may be interested to see the Tunnels of Claudius, located south of the city. They were built by Emperor Claudius between 41 and 52 A.D. when the emperor made the first attempts at draining the huge Lake Fucino, one of the largest lakes in Italy. To create the tunnels and the main gallery, 25,000 slaves were needed, and they dug 32 wells and 6 tunnels.

## What to See

- Tunnels of Claudius. "cunicoli di Claudio," the original tunnels for the draining of the lake in Roman times, which can still be walked
- Orsini-Colonna Castle, with a 16th century portal
- Cathedral of San Bartolomeo
- Sanctuary of the Madonna di Pietraquaria

The lake was largely drained, but with the fall of the Roman Empire the tunnels were obstructed and the lake returned to its previous levels. Many centuries later, the work was completed by finally draining Lake Fucino, building on the original project of Emperor Claudius and turning the land under the great lake into a fertile plain. After the draining of the lake, wide fields became available for cultivation, creating a fertile agricultural area, and the area underwent tremendous growth.

One point worth mentioning is about Father Antoniu Petrescu, a Romanian who became a priest in Italy in 2004 and today is a parish priest in Avezzano. During the day, he carries out normal priestly functions, and at night he becomes a rock star performing on stage. His great passion is to imitate his idol, Elvis Presley. You can be the judge if you watch him on YouTube. ■

## Important Dates

- **April 27** — Feast of the Madonna di Pietraquaria, with Via Crucis and fireworks near the sanctuary among the pine trees
- **July** — Beer festival
- **Early August** — Festival of "pasta e ceci," with folk games and shows
- **August 24** — Feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle
- **September** — Potato festival

## Sources:

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avezzano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avezzano)

[www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/l aquila/avezzano.htm](http://www.italyheritage.com/regions/abruzzo/l aquila/avezzano.htm)

# AVEZZANO

PROVINCIA DI L'AQUILA, REGIONE ABRUZZO

**Translated by Ennio DiTullio**

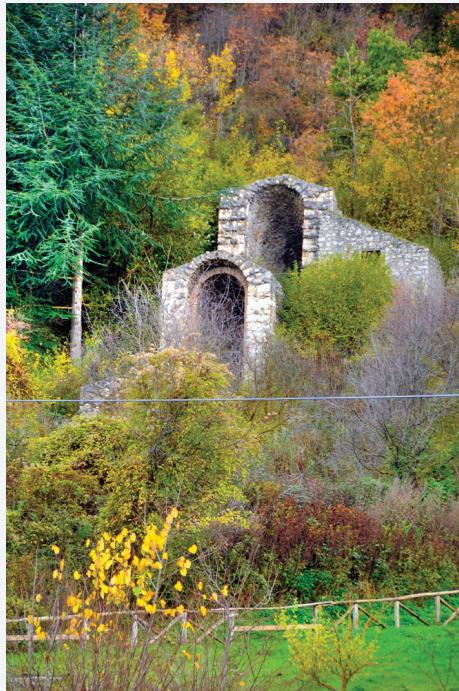
**L**a città di Avezzano, in provincia dell'Aquila, è vicina al comune di Ortucchio, profilato nel Notiziario di luglio/agosto e famoso per la vicinanza al Centro Spaziale del Fucino, il più grande centro di controllo satellitare del mondo. Avezzano conta 41.000 abitanti, detti Avezzanesi, e si trova a 53 chilometri da L'Aquila e 60 chilometri da Roma.

La città trae le sue origini come centro urbano esistente nel IX secolo. Ora è il secondo comune più popoloso della provincia e il sesto della regione. È il principale centro commerciale, industriale e agricolo della Marsica, con nelle vicinanze importanti industrie ad alta tecnologia e un grande parco satellitare Telespazio del Centro Spaziale del Fucino.

Il nome della città deriva da "Ave Jane", un'invozione al dio romano Giano, e da "Ad Vettianum" che significa "alla famiglia Vettia", domiciliata nel vicino comune di Alba Fucens. I primi insediamenti in questa zona iniziarono con i lavori di costruzione per la bonifica del lago voluti dall'imperatore Claudio nel I secolo dC. Il territorio mostra tracce dei primi tentativi di drenare il bacino malsano, dove ancora esistono i resti delle mura romane lungo un alveo.

Nel XV secolo Avezzano fu sotto il dominio di Gentile Virgilio Orsini, che vi costruì un castello nel 1490. Tra la fine dell'ottocento e l'inizio del novecento, dopo il prosciugamento del lago del Fucino, Avezzano conobbe una crescita formidabile, ma purtroppo fu completamente distrutta nel un devastante terremoto la mattina del 13 gennaio 1915, uno dei peggiori terremoti della storia italiana. Avezzano fu l'epicentro del terremoto e solo la Casa dei Palazzi e un'alà del Castello Orsini furono risparmiate.

La città fu praticamente distrutta dallo scuotimento e solo un palazzo è sopravvissuto. Il terremoto, di magnitudo 6,7 della scala Richter, causò danni estesi su un'ampia area del Centro e Sud Italia. A Roma, San Giovanni in Laterano riportò una statua caduta e ci furono persino crepe nella Colonna di Marco Aurelio.



*Tunnels of Claudio*

Credit: Claudio Parente

A seguito del terremoto del 1915, la città fu completamente ricostruita lungo strade rettilinee e parallele, con ampi spazi verdi e belle ville.

Durante la Prima e Seconda Guerra Mondiale, vicino alla città era situato un campo di concentramento, dove venivano internati i prigionieri di guerra stranieri. Ulteriori distruzioni furono causate dai bombardamenti aerei nel 1944. Avezzano fu gravemente danneggiata e poi ricostruita dopo i bombardamenti alleati del 1944.

I visitatori di Avezzano potrebbero essere interessati a vedere le Gallerie di Claudio, situate a sud della città. Furono costruiti dall'imperatore Claudio tra il 41 e il 52 d.C. quando l'imperatore fece i primi tentativi di prosciugamento dell'enorme Lago Fucino, uno dei laghi più grandi d'Italia. Per realizzare i cunicoli e la galleria principale sono stati necessari 25.000 schiavi, che hanno scavato 32 pozzi e 6 cunicoli.

Il lago fu in gran parte prosciugato, ma con la caduta dell'Impero Romano le gallerie furono

ostruite e il lago tornò ai livelli precedenti. Molti secoli dopo, l'opera fu completata con la bonifica definitiva del Lago Fucino, costruendo sul progetto originario dell'imperatore Claudio e trasformando il terreno sotto il grande lago in una fertile pianura. Dopo il prosciugamento del lago, ampi campi si resero disponibili per la coltivazione, creando una fertile area agricola, e l'area conobbe una forte crescita economica.

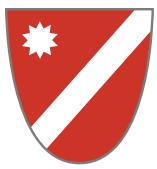
Un punto degno di nota riguarda Padre Antoniu Petrescu, rumeno, divenuto sacerdote in Italia nel 2004 e oggi parroco ad Avezzano. Durante il giorno svolge le normali funzioni sacerdotali e di notte diventa una rockstar esibendosi sul palco. La sua grande passione è imitare il suo idolo, Elvis Presley. Lo puoi vedere su YouTube e sta a te giudicare. ■

## Attrazioni del luogo:

- Gallerie di Claudio. "cunicoli di Claudio", le originarie gallerie per il drenaggio del lago in epoca romana, ancora percorribili
- Castello Orsini-Colonna, con portale cinquecentesco
- Cattedrale di San Bartolomeo
- Santuario della Madonna di Pietraquaria

## Date da ricordare:

- **27 aprile** — Festa della Madonna di Pietraquaria, con Via Crucis e fuochi d'artificio nei pressi del Santuario tra i pini
- **Luglio** — Festa della birra
- **Inizio agosto** — Sagra della "pasta e ceci", con giochi e spettacoli popolari
- **24 agosto** — Festa di San Bartolomeo Apostolo
- **Settembre** — Sagra della patata



# LARINO

PROVINCE OF CAMPOBASSO, REGION OF MOLISE

By Nancy DeSanti

The beautiful town of Larino is located in the fertile valley of the Biferno River. The old town, as seen from the mountains, is shaped like a bird's wing. The new town, called Piano San Leonardo, is built on a mountainside. This little town is an important producer of wheat as well as prized olive oil made with Gentile di Larino olives. It is also notable for the many remains from different historical periods. The town has approximately 8,100 inhabitants known as Larinesi.

Larino is one of the most important tourist resorts in Molise. In the past, it was an important Roman "municipium" and there are ruins of a Roman amphitheater and villas with splendid mosaic floors dating back to that time.

Larino was a key center of the Italic tribe of Frentani due to its position on the border with Apulia, and since pre-Roman times there was a special worship of Mars, the god of war. In 217 B.C., the Romans defeated Hannibal here. Later on, it became a Roman "municipium." Its inhabitants were granted Roman citizenship, and then under the Emperor Augustus it was included in the Secunda Regio (Apulia). The ancient Roman town was located in the area now called Piano San Leonardo, which is an important archeological site.

Throughout the Middle Ages Larino was repeatedly sacked by the Saracens. In 1300, a devastating earthquake hit the area, and a few years later the Saracens utterly destroyed the settlement. After that, Larino was reconstructed on the present site and was ruled by a number of different feudal lords (the Orsini, Pappacoda, Carafa and Sangro).

Then in 1656, a terrible plague decimated the population. Many thousands of people died and the 373 survivors decided to abandon the town, but thanks to the energy of their Bishop Giuseppe Catalano, they came back and the population started to grow again.

Among the interesting sights to see is the town hall, previously the villa of the Carafa and Sangro lords, with a solar clock from the Roman ruins. Inside are also found Roman tombstones



A colorful cart in the San Pardo procession.

Credit: primopianomolise.it

and mosaics from the 3rd century A.D. Also worth visiting is the ancient historical center, with medieval mansions, alleys and towers, which create a unique atmosphere.

The church of San Francesco has some beautiful art works inside, and in the dome there is a beautiful fresco with Mary crowned by Jesus, by Paolo Gamba, an 18th century artist from Ripabottoni. Over the door there is a painting with Jesus driving the merchants out of the Temple, probably by Francesco Solimena, a 17th century artist from Canale.

Visitors might also want to visit the beautiful Cathedral of the Assunta and San Pardo, a gothic church completed in 1319, with a magnificent portal made by Francesco Petrini from Lancia-no. Over the portal, there is a giant rose window in the Apulian style.

One of the memorable events in the town takes place between May 25-27 each year, as the residents of Larino celebrate the feast of their patron saint, San Pardo, with a unique event characterized by a parade of floats decorated with colorful paper flowers drawn by cows and oxen. The procession starts from the beautiful 15th century cathedral and reaches the cemetery, where the statue of St. Primianus is kept throughout the year.

The carts symbolize family and continuity of tradition handed down from generation to generation. Each wagon is characterized by a number, representing the date it was created.

The parade is a tradition that is very important to Larino's residents and it manages to involve even the youngest generations. The procession is about three kilometers long with more than 100 wagons. They are divided into two types: the oldest called "Capanna" and the more recent ones called "Trionfali" which are covered with thousands of colorful flowers and olive branches.

Each cart is pulled by two white oxen. The procession is at once a religious event, a historic event, and a family celebration. Each cart belongs to a particular family, and the cart's position in the procession is a sign of social standing. During the parade, the cart drivers sing a song in dialect that makes the atmosphere of the celebrations even more unique. ■

## What to See

- Roman amphitheater
- Cathedral
- Fontana Nuova
- Ducal Palace, probably originally built as a Norman castle

## Important Dates

- **May 15** — Feast of San Primiano, with a procession of children carrying colored standards
- **May 25-27** — Sagra of San Pardo, with a parade of decorated wagons drawn by oxen.

# LARINO

PROVINCIA DI CAMPOBASSO, REGIONE MOLISE

Translated by Ennio DiTullio

**L**a bella cittadina di Larino si trova nella fertile valle del fiume Biferno. Il centro storico, visto dalle montagne, ha la forma dell'ala di un uccello. Il nuovo paese, chiamato Piano San Leonardo, è costruito sul fianco di una montagna. Questo piccolo paese è un importante produttore di grano e pregiato olio d'oliva prodotto con olive della Gentile di Larino. È anche notevole per i numerosi resti di diversi periodi storici. Il comune conta circa 8.100 abitanti detti Larinesi.

Larino è una delle località turistiche più importanti del Molise. In passato fu un importante "municipium" romano e di quell'epoca sono presenti resti di un anfiteatro romano e ville con splendidi pavimenti a mosaico.

Larino fu un centro chiave della tribù italica dei Frentani per la sua posizione al confine con la Puglia, e fin dall'epoca preromana vi era un culto particolare di Marte, dio della guerra. Nel 217 a.C. qui i romani sconfissero Annibale. In seguito divenne "municipium" romano. Ai suoi abitanti fu concessa la cittadinanza romana, e poi sotto l'imperatore Augusto fu inclusa nella Secunda Regio (Puglia). L'antica città romana si trovava nell'area oggi denominata Piano San Leonardo, importante sito archeologico.

Per tutto il Medioevo Larino fu più volte saccheggiata dai Saraceni. Nel 1300 un devastante terremoto colpì la zona e pochi anni dopo i Saraceni distrussero completamente l'insediamento. Successivamente Larino fu ricostruita nell'attuale sito e fu governata da diversi feudatari (gli Orsini, Pappacoda, Carafa e Sangro).

Poi nel 1656 una terribile pestilenza ha decimato la popolazione. Morirono molte migliaia di persone e i 373 superstiti decisamente abbandonare il paese, ma grazie all'energia del loro Vescovo Giuseppe Catalano tornarono e la popolazione riprese a crescere.

Tra i luoghi interessanti da vedere c'è il municipio, già villa dei signori Carafa e Sangro, con un orologio solare proveniente da rovine romane. All'interno si trovano anche lapidi e mosaici-



An aerial view of Larino shows its bird wing shape.

Credit: Wikipedia

ci romani del III secolo d.C. Da visitare anche l'antico centro storico, con palazzi medievali, vicoli e torri, che creano un'atmosfera unica.

La chiesa di San Francesco conserva al suo interno delle belle opere d'arte, e nella cupola un bellissimo affresco con Maria incoronata da Gesù, opera di Paolo Gamba, artista ripabottino del XVIII secolo. Sopra la porta vi è un dipinto con Gesù che caccia i mercanti fuori dal Tempio, probabilmente di Francesco Solimena, artista canalese del XVII secolo.

Da visitare anche la bellissima Cattedrale dell'Assunta e San Pardo, chiesa gotica completata nel 1319, con un magnifico portale realizzato dal lancianese Francesco Petrini. Sopra il portale vi è un gigantesco rosone in stile pugliese.

Tra il 25 e il 27 maggio di ogni anno si svolge uno degli eventi memorabili della cittadina, in quanto gli abitanti di Larino celebrano la festa del loro patrono, San Pardo, con un evento unico caratterizzato da una sfilata di carri decorati con colorati fiori di carta tirati da mucche e buoi. La processione parte dalla bellissima cattedrale quattrocentesca e raggiunge il cimitero, dove è custodita durante tutto l'anno la statua di San Primiano.

I carri simboleggiano la famiglia e la continuità della tradizione tramandata di generazione in generazione. Ogni carro è caratterizzato da un numero, che rappresenta la data di creazione.

La sfilata è una tradizione molto importante per

gli abitanti di Larino e riesce a coinvolgere anche le generazioni più giovani. Il corteo è lungo circa tre chilometri con più di 100 carri. Si dividono in due tipologie: le più antiche dette "Capanna" e le più recenti dette "Trionfali" che sono ricoperte da migliaia di fiori colorati e rami di ulivo.

Ogni carro è trainato da due buoi bianchi. La processione è allo stesso tempo un evento religioso, un evento storico e una festa di famiglia. Ogni carro appartiene a una particolare famiglia e la posizione del carro nella processione è un segno di posizione sociale. Durante la sfilata i carrettieri intonano una canzone in dialetto che rende ancora più unica l'atmosfera dei festeggiamenti. ■

## Le attrazioni del luogo:

- Anfiteatro Romano
- Cattedrale
- Fontana Nuova
- Palazzo Ducale, probabilmente originariamente costruito come castello normanno

## Date da ricordare:

- **15 maggio** — Festa di San Primiano, con processione di bambini che portano stendardi colorati
- **25-27 maggio** — Sagra di San Pardo, con sfilata di carri addobbati trainati da buoi.

## Sources:

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larino)

[www.italyheritage.com/regions/molise/province-campobasso/larino.htm](http://www.italyheritage.com/regions/molise/province-campobasso/larino.htm)

[magazine.doodi.it/en/destinations/the-procession-of-san-pardo-larino](http://magazine.doodi.it/en/destinations/the-procession-of-san-pardo-larino)

# Molisana Wins Historic Olympic Medal

▼ *Continued from page 1*

## Football Team Stuns Europe — and the World

Since Italy's stunning triumph in the 2006 World Cup of international soccer (known as football to the rest of the world and *calcio* in Italy), the national team's performance had slipped significantly in major competitions, culminating in their failure even to qualify for the 2018 World Cup. This was an unthinkable disgrace for a perennial football power where *calcio* is a national passion. So, going into the prestigious and highly competitive Euro 2020 tournament, played a year late because of the pandemic, Italy was not considered to be on the same level as the likes of Belgium, France, Spain and England.

Roberto Mancini, a former player on the national team and on several top clubs in Europe, had other ideas. Taking over as manager of Italy's squad, Mancini brought in a new generation of players and instilled a system that called for flair and creativity coupled with Italy's traditional reliance on strong defense. Italy sailed undefeated through the first round, playing with a joy and passion that had been missing from the Italian team. In the second round, against tougher competition, the *Azzuri* defeated the number one ranked Belgium squad, then won a heart stopping game against Spain. Facing England in the final in London, Mancini's men fell behind early, steadied themselves under the leadership of team captain Giorgio Chellini,

tied the game and held England scoreless the rest of the way. They then clinched the trophy with a dramatic win on penalty kicks.

Italy — and Italian neighborhoods across the world — exploded in celebration. The website "Wanted in Rome" reported that the celebration in the Italian capital was so loud, it registered on equipment used to monitor earthquakes. The Associated Press quoted a young Neapolitan as saying, "This means so much. To finally be able to feel the joy that we've been missing, it goes beyond sports."

## Strong Showing in the Olympics

Like the Euro tournament, the 2020 Summer Olympic Games held in Tokyo were delayed a year by the pandemic. And as with the football tournament, Italy surprised everyone. Italian athletes won 40 medals: 10 gold, 10 silver and 20 bronze, the nation's highest total ever. Along the way, Italian athletes provided some of the most memorable moments of the games.

Lamont Marcell Jacobs on August 1 stunned the track community when he took the gold medal in the prestigious men's 100-meter sprint. Jacobs became the first Italian ever to win a medal in an event long dominated by athletes from the United States and, more recently, Jamaica. Jacobs was born in El Paso, Texas, to



Lamont Marcell Jacobs celebrates his victory win the men's 100-meter sprint..

Credit: Doug Mills/The New York Times

an Italian mother and African-American father. His parents split when Jacobs was very young. His mother Viviana took him to Italy and raised her son in Desenzano on the southern shore of Lake Garda in the region of Lombardy. Jacobs also anchored the Italian men's 4 X 100 meter sprint relay team in their gold medal effort.

On the same day as Jacobs' win, Gianmarco Tamberi shared the gold medal in the men's high jump. After Tamberi and his friend and rival Mutaz Barshim of Qatar had completed all their jumps, the two were tied at the top of the standings. The athletes agreed to share the gold medal, allowed under Olympic rules, and images of their joyous embrace won hearts throughout the world. Moments later, Tamberi was among the first to greet Jacobs after his victory.

## A First for Molise

Italian men and women also won gold medals in race walking, cycling, sailing, rowing, karate and taekwondo, but we in the AMHS are especially proud of a bronze medalist in judo. Maria Centracchio was born in Castel di Sangro in the province of L'Aquila in Abruzzo, and raised in the province of Isernia in Molise. On July 27, she defeated Juul Franssen of the Netherlands for the bronze medal in the women's 63 kg class judo event. Centracchio thus becomes the first athlete from Molise to win an Olympic medal in an individual sport. In 1996, Pasquale Grania was part of the volleyball team that took a silver medal, and in 1936, Aldo Masciotta participated in the Italian team's silver medal victory in the saber competition in fencing.

To our sister *Molisana*, and to all of the football players and Olympic athletes, your extended Italian family offers a huge *molto grazie* for lifting our spirits in a troubled world. ■



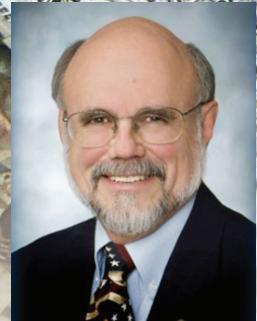
Italy's captain Giorgio Chellini (2nd from left holding cup) led his teammates in celebrating their Euro 2020 triumph. Credit: Nick Potts/PA Images



LUNCHEON MEETING

# AMHS, CISC & IAMDC LUNCHEON MEETING

## With Steven Livengood Chief Visitor Guide, U.S. Capitol



**Please join us** for what is sure to be an interesting and informative event with Steven Livengood, Director of Public Programs at the U.S. Capitol Historical Society and the Chief Visitor Guide to the U.S. Capitol. You will surely learn a lot about the Italian connection to the Capitol, especially Constantino Brumidi, called the "Michelangelo of the Capitol." A raffle will be conducted at the end of the meeting.

**NOTE: We will adhere to the District of Columbia mask mandate for indoors and any other COVID-related guidelines.**

**SUNDAY,  
OCTOBER 3  
1:00 PM**

at Casa Italiana  
595 Third Street, NW,  
Washington, DC

### MENU

#### Catered by *Fontina Grille*

Menu includes house salad •  
vegetarian penne pasta with tomato  
sauce • rice • chicken piccata.

Beverages are included.

### COST

**\$20.00 members | \$25.00 non-members.**

**PAYING ONLINE IS ENCOURAGED AT  
[www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org](http://www.abruzzomoliseheritagesociety.org)**  
**Visa or Mastercard accepted**  
(See "Upcoming Events" on the home page)

***Paid reservations must be received by September 28.***

Questions on the program, Peter Bell (202) 276-2483.

 **Return with Payment**

**PAID RESERVATIONS for  
AMHS General Society Meeting on Sunday, October 3, 2021**

Please make check payable to AMHS.  
Send to AMHS, c/o Peter Bell, 328 8th Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20002

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Check Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

DETAILS  
ON  
Page 15



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**RESERVATION DEADLINE:** September 28

## U.S. Postal Service Honors **BOCCE** with New Stamp

By Joseph "Sonny" Scafetta, Jr.

We can now add bocce to the list of Italian-themed stamps issued by the U.S. Postal Service. On August 12, the service released a stamp recognizing bocce as one of eight popular back yard games.

Bocce, also spelled boccie and bocci, originated in Italy and is played with differently colored wooden bowling balls and a small white ball, known as the pallino, on a long, narrow, flat, clay or dirt court. The other seven games recognized were badminton, corn hole (also known as bean bag toss), croquet, frisbee throwing, horse shoe tossing, tether ball, and baseball.

The first day of issue ceremony took place during the Great American Stamp Show held in Hall G of the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont outside Chicago, Illinois. A pane of 16 forever stamps, showing two of each game, became available nationwide at all local post offices starting on Friday, August 13. The price for a single pane was originally \$8.80 but, on Sunday, August 29, the price increased to \$9.28 when the first-class mailing rate went up to 58 cents. The pane will be available until August 11, 2022, when it will go off sale. ■



### THE ABRUZZO AND MOLISE HERITAGE SOCIETY

of the Washington, DC Area

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