

The Founders' Log

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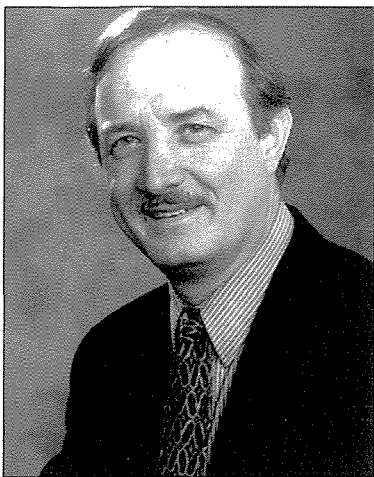
Founders of the Italic Studies Institute, 1987

Stefano Gristina

John Mancini

Carl Pescosolido

Dear Member:



It has certainly been a momentous couple of months. In the aftermath of the September attacks on America, some of us may question the relevancy of many things in our lives compared to America's loss and its new challenges. That might even include wondering how relevant "Italic studies" is at such a time as this. In truth, the attacks on America were not merely a declaration of war on the United States, but on Western Civilization itself. President Bush has called the attackers "barbarians," the traditional enemies of civilization. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy has described the terror as a reaction of fanatics still stuck in 7th Century Islam. In every sense, what has been violated is that which our ancestors established, along with the Greeks, three millennia ago and passed on to Europe and the world. So, Italic studies is very much relevant. There is still a need to bring light to the darkness. It is our task to insure that America continues to reflect the light of our progressive civilization rather than a dark jumble of primitive dogmas.

We couldn't help but notice that Americans of Italian descent have, yet again, sacrificed in defense of this great nation. Mayor Rudy Giuliani has been in the forefront of this since the morning of September 11th, when he, himself, went into harm's way at the World Trade Center. NY Fire Chief Peter Ganci, Jr., the highest uniformed officer on the force, perished during the initial rescue operations while personally leading the effort. The director of the World Trade Center security force, Fred Morrone, also died in the disaster. Brothers Tommy and Peter Langone, a policeman and fireman respectively, disappeared and are presumed dead. Another cop-fireman team of brothers, Joe and John Vigiano, were lost. Father and son, Joseph and Joseph, Jr. Angelini, both firefighters from a traditional Fire Department family, are also gone. We counted some 67 Italian-surnamed firemen and policemen among the missing/dead, almost 20% of the uniformed men who responded to the disaster. It must be said that many of these were ranking officers who refused to stay in the rear. To them must be added 57 Italian nationals and an untold number of Italian-American office workers.

How can we, in good conscience, allow a return to a media image of Italian-Americans that is so at odds with these realities of our existence in America? Sadly, even President Bush compared the Islamic terrorists to the Mafia in his historic speech before Congress. (The irony is that he was not aware that the very word *mafia* is of Arabic origin.) Curiously, he omitted Communism from his list of scourges of the 20th Century and expressly asked that Americans not stereotype Arabs and Muslims. Will things change or will America need Italic bad guys to divert it? Memories fade quickly.

It is with much sadness that I report the passing of Carl Pescosolido, co-Founder of the Institute. Peski, as he was known to us, died on August 8th at age 90. I attended his memorial service in Hamilton, MA. What struck me was the universal acclaim he received for his love of heritage and charitable works. At the reception that followed, his widow Ginny, a very loving and caring lady who encouraged Peski's generosity to our Institute, had the presence of mind, despite her grief, to ask about the progress of the *Aurora Program*, a favorite of both hers and Peski's.

You may have noticed that this Log bears the name of the Italic Institute of America. It is now official. Many thanks to our General Counsel George Ricci who did the *pro bono* work that accomplished this name change. George is a close personal friend who has held official positions within the Institute for many years and still guides our deliberations.

Hopefully, you have all received Issue XXXI of *The Italic Way*. We dare you to find in it a cannoli article or fluff piece about the old neighborhood. *The Italic Way* is just not that kind of reading. Our national magazine represents a higher form of Italian American culture, one that fits the reality of our heritage. Which brings me to an important point: If you truly believe in something, you must support it financially. Whether it's the environment, your neighborhood, your religion, or your heritage, a financial commitment is imperative. The men and women who make up the front line of your Institute labor for little or nothing. And although it is a labor of love, the overhead required to keep such a national organization in fighting trim is something that needs to be paid monthly. I believe that we are the last generation willing and able to achieve the higher form of Italic culture on this continent. A disturbing thought. What that means is we must support the Institute now. Please consider a sizable donation to the 2001 National Appeal. Take advantage of the year-end tax deduction. This year your generosity is needed more than ever, since the Attack on America has wiped out most of our New York City grant, and possibly our New York State grants.

Our 14th Annual Awards Ceremony took place last July at the Columbus Citizens House in Manhattan. Five worthy individuals received our Silver Medallion. Finally, Tony DeNonno, our Aurora Program Director, received a long-overdue Distinguished Service Award. Photos of the event can be seen on the following pages.

Sincerest regards,

John L. Mancini

AURORA PROGRAM BEGINS SEASON

Into its 15th season, our Aurora Program predates the founding of the Institute. This year's budget was \$75,000, with most of the funds to come from legislative grants, predominantly New York City. However, the terrorist attack has drained both the City and the State budgets and our grants have been slashed. Still, we will attempt to conduct as many classes as possible, based on our member donations. Serving hundreds of children each year, our "school system" is the only one of its kind in the Italian American national community. Our philosophy is to enrich all American kids with Italic civilization, the basis of Western Civilization. This is so vital in keeping America, culturally, on track.

GOLF OUTING

Our annual golf outing was held on September 24th with over 90 players signed up. President Vince Pizzulli managed the fund-raiser with the help of his wife Jo, as well as Monica Polizzi and our office staff, Rita Mancini and Maria Peluso. This money helps carry us into Aurora season before the grants come in.

NATIONAL APPEAL

Charity begins at home. It begins with the belief that something must be done to correct a wrong or to change the status quo. Aren't those the things that your Institute was created for? Who, by now, doesn't realize that the Italic Institute was established because things weren't right in America; and that other organizations weren't addressing the real issues? We are all mature enough to know that money makes things happen. Donating money for the defense and promotion of your ethnic heritage is not money wasted. How many of us can hide our Italian roots? Your last name won't allow it. So, rather than a mark of shame, as many in Hollywood make it, let us make it a badge of pride.

If you really believe in your heritage and the work of the Italic Institute of America, please give generously. It's Tax Deductible!

YES, I want to demonstrate my support of the Institute's mission.

Amount \$ _____

Make your check payable to **Italic Institute of America**, P.O. Box 818, Floral Park, NY 11001

Name _____

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Your donation will be used to support *Aurora* Youth Scholarships, *The Italic Way* Magazine, and Anti-Defamation Activities (Project Italia).

YEAR 2001 NATIONAL APPEAL

We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their generosity. We regret if we have inadvertently omitted anyone -- please inform us of any omissions.

Special Friend of the Institute

Carl A. Pescosolido, Sr.

Guardians of the Italian Heritage - \$1,000 +

Viola Cirio (\$1,000)

Joseph E. Fay (\$1,000)

Thomas Lacorazza (\$1,000)

Builders of Italic Pride - \$500 +

John L. Mancini (\$500)

Patrons of Italian Heritage - \$250 +

Maria Gloria (\$250)

The Stauber Family Foundation (\$250)

Sustainers of the Institute - \$100 +

Long Island Society of Italian Americans (\$200)

Anthony Martignetti (\$100)

Charles Sclafani (\$100)

John & Rosemary Villanella (\$150)

A.P. Zechella (\$100)

Supporters of the Institute - \$50 +

Vito & Susan Buccelleto (\$50)

Rosanna Cavallo (\$50)

Charles J. Cerutti (\$50)

Dr. & Mrs. Santo Chiarello (\$50)

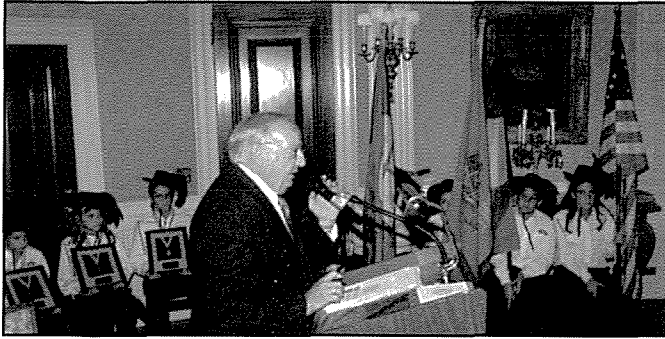
Jacqueline Hines (\$50)

Andrew Minerva (\$50)

Melinda Sapone (\$56)

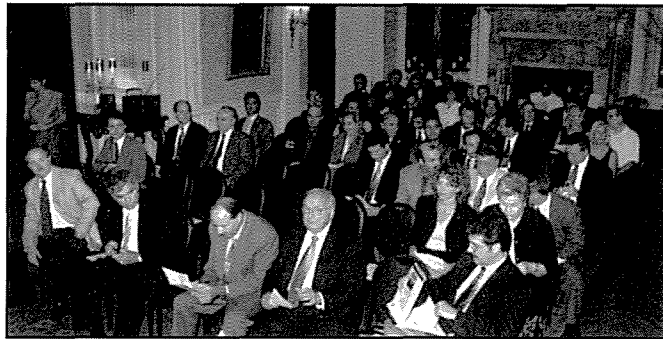
Cesidio Tallini (\$50)

Dr. & Mrs. Harry A. Winters (\$50)



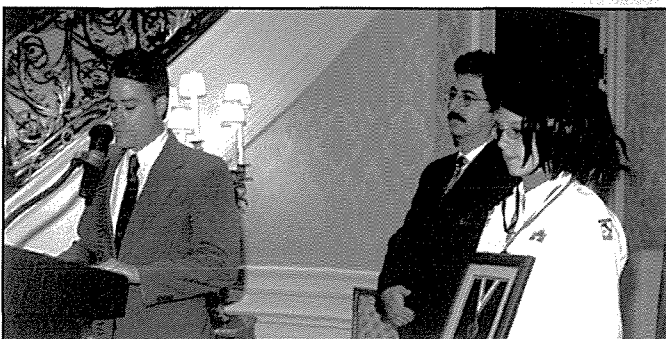
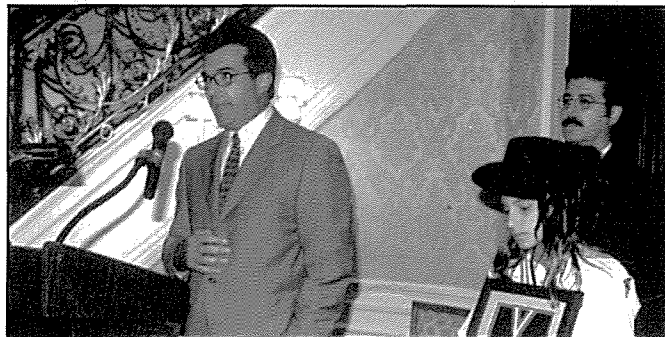
Institute President
Vincent Pizzulli opens the
Awards Ceremony

The audience at the Columbus
Citizens House in Manhattan



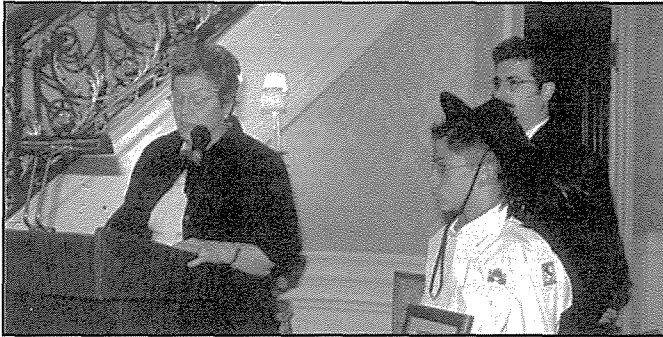
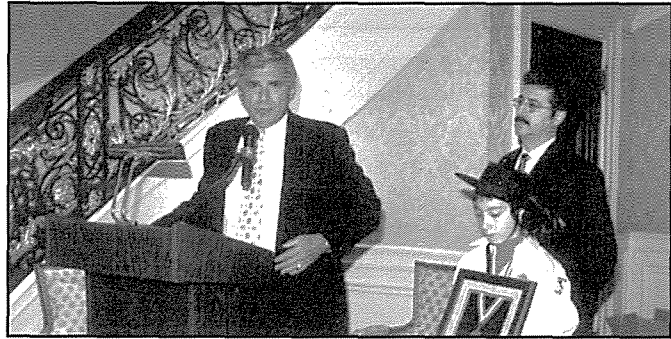
Chairman John Mancini unfurls the
flag of Venice
in tribute to
John Cabot's landing
in America on
June 24, 1497. Cabot
planted both the
Venetian flag and
the English flag.

Institute Board member Ron Bellistri of
Copstat Security receives the Silver
Medallion on behalf of humorist/ animator
Joseph Barbera (Hanna Barbera Studios).
Master of Ceremonies Rosario Iaconis,
Director of The Italic Way Magazine,
stands beside him.



Institute Advisor Bill Dal Cerro,
our Chicago representative,
receives the Silver Medallion on
behalf of Rep. Marge Scafati
Roukema. Bill was the author of
the Institute's media study quoted
in Mrs. Roukema's House
Resolution against anti-Italic
defamation.

Award recipient Buddy Fortunato acknowledges his Silver Medallion for his work as owner of the weekly newspaper The Italian Tribune.



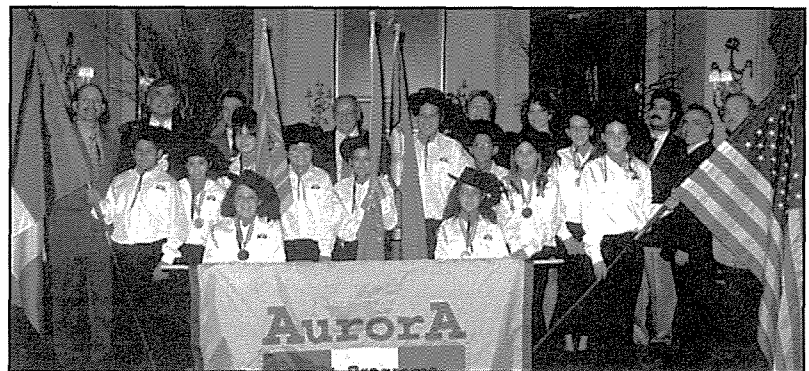
Eileen Riotta Sirey, founder of the National Organization of Italian American Women, accepts the Silver Medallion on behalf of the Honorable Peter Rodino, Jr., former chairman of the House Judiciary Committee during the Watergate hearings.

Laura Savini, President of the National Organization of Italian American Women and Vice President of WLIW-TV, accepts the Silver Medallion on behalf of Dennis Tito, space voyager.



Institute's Aurora Education & Scholarship Program Director, Tony De Nonno accepts his Distinguished Service Award for the expansion and funding of the Aurora Program.

The ceremony concluded with a gathering of the Aurora Color Guard and the award recipients.





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L'Italo Americano is published weekly and contains articles about events in Italy, the United States and California. There are both ENGLISH and ITALIAN News Sections.

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November Almanac

The ninth month of the year until the Romans moved New Year's from March to January.

November 5 - Ella T. Grasso was elected governor of Connecticut in 1994. She was the first female elected as a governor in the United States.

November 7 - Patriot Giuseppe Garibaldi turns Southern Italy over to King Victor Emanuel in 1860 with a handshake after having liberated it from the Spanish Bourbons. The following year, Garibaldi was offered a commission as general in the Union Army by President Lincoln.

November 10 - In 1494, the first book of accounting was published by Fra Luca Pacioli. It explained to the world the Italian method of double-entry bookkeeping, a mainstay of today's capitalist society.

November 15 - In the year 1512, Michelangelo's ceiling painting in the Sistine Chapel was first seen by the general public.

November 19 - In 1941, the Italian Army's crack Ariete Division fought a gallant defense against overwhelming British & Empire forces at El Gobi in the Western Desert. Their stand allowed Rommel's Afrika Corps to safely retreat.

November 21 - The Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge was dedicated in 1964. The longest suspension bridge in the world was named after the Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano, who first sailed into New York Harbor in 1524 for the French.

November 25 - Joltin' Joe diMaggio, baseball great, was born in 1914 in Martinez, CA.

November 27 - Italian physicist Giovanni Giorgi was born in 1871. He developed the Giorgi International System of Measurement, also known as "mksa." He contributed greatly to hydroelectric technology, urban trolley development and electrical distribution networks.

November 29 - Composer Giacomo Puccini (*Madama Butterfly*) died in 1924 before completing *Turandot*.

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