

# *The Founders' Log*

No. 16

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## Founders of the Italic Studies Institute, 1987

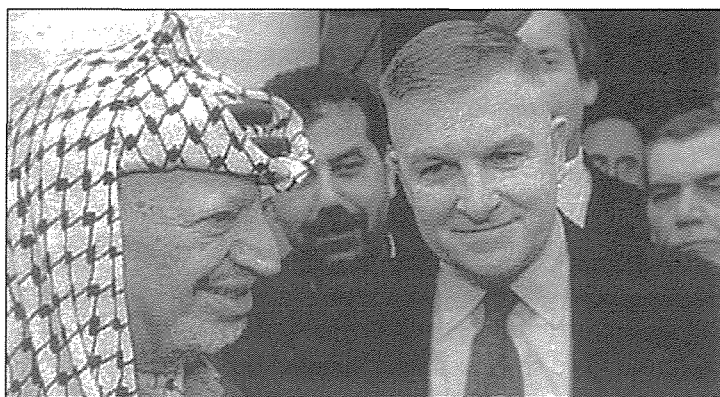
*Stefano Gristina*

*John Mancini*

*Carl Pescosolido*

Dear Member:

For those of you who have followed the Institute's homage to Italian greatness over the years, I offer you a perfect example of our leading-edge philosophy. You may recall that we spotted Marine General Anthony Zinni back in 1997 when he was involved



**U.S. Envoy Anthony Zinni (r.) with Yasser Arafat**

in the Somalia evacuation. The Institute honored him in 1998 along with the Italian Chief of Staff Admiral Venturoni at one of our galas. General Zinni is now up to his elbows in the Middle East as President Bush's personal envoy. For the record, Zinni didn't sell one table at the gala. He didn't bring in one journal ad. We did not honor

him for his ability to sell tickets for us. We honored him because he represented all that is excellent about our heritage. This is what separates us from the other organizations. Ironically, Zinni's ancestors hailed from Abruzzo, the same Italian region that Pontius Pilate called home. Not much in the Middle East has changed in 2,000 years.

On the lighter side, we have begun the new year with some new initiatives. You'll find one of them enclosed. *The Last Sucker* is a cartoon satire aimed at Hollywood. Offered up to the various media by snail mail and e-mail, *The Last Sucker* carries on the ancient Italian tradition of ribbing our adversaries by way of art. You can visit our website to view a full-color version, as well as the official press release that accompanies it. One picture may be worth 10,000 protest letters.

Our *Aurora* Italian Language and Culture Program for 2001-2002 came to a gratifying conclusion. As you recall, we went into the program right after the 9/11 tragedy with a major cut in New York City grants. I am happy to announce that due to the extraordinary efforts of our *Aurora* Director Tony DeNonno, City Council Budget

Director Frank Tramantano, and the generosity of our members, we squeezed through another year. Tony's persistence gained us a miraculous \$20,000 grant from Health Plus, an HMO led by CFO Frank Mascara. This is what can happen when Italian Americans get in synch! Special donations also came in from the S. Antonio Abate Castrolfilippi Society (\$1,000) and the Italian Club of Staten Island (\$750). We are proud to be the only, repeat, ONLY organization in the United States that has such an extensive after-school system for Italian heritage. Others give money away, we give education.

Among our other initiatives, soon to be released, is a study on Italian American progress since the 1980's. It was prompted by a casual remark made by Bill Tonelli of the *Village Voice*. Tonelli is a firm believer that this is the best of all possible worlds (i.e., a cockeyed optimist). He has convinced himself that media stereotyping and defamation have not adversely affected Italian American progress. Our study, the *Gianelli-Cardillo Report*, will examine this opinion.

And we haven't forgotten *The Italic Way Magazine*. It has been laid out and the articles are in progress. I'll refrain from promising a deadline, but late spring seems reasonable.

I wish to leave you with one thought. Last year, Robert Mondavi, the world-renowned vintner, gave \$35 million to a California university for a wine laboratory and fine arts program. Last year, businessman Dennis Tito spent \$20 million to ride into space. Ten years ago, an Italian American businessman spent \$20 million to run for governor of New York (he lost). A few years back, shopping center magnate Edward DeBartolo, Sr., gave Notre Dame \$30 million. Had these men and scores of other multi-millionaires had the pride of heritage and some faith in Italian American organizations, we would soon begin acting like the fifth largest ethnic group in America. Is the problem with our millionaires or with us? We shall explore this question further. In the meantime, thank you for any and all donations. They are, unquestionably, a greater sacrifice on your part than a proportionate amount from the truly wealthy.

Warmest regards,

John L. Mancini

**Italic Institute of America**

**Production Center**

PO Box 818  
Floral Park, NY 11002  
Tel. (516) 488-7400  
Fax. (516) 488-4889

**Executive Office**

164 Madison Avenue  
6th Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
Tel. (212) 268-8085

E-mail: [ItalicOne@aol.com](mailto:ItalicOne@aol.com)

Website: [www.italic.org](http://www.italic.org)

**NATIONAL APPEAL**

We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their generosity. We regret if we have inadvertently omitted anyone.

**Special Friends of the Institute**

Health Plus Prepaid Health Svcs. (\$20,000)

Carl A. Pescosolido, Sr. (\$100,000)

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Viola Cirio (\$1,000)

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John L. Mancini (\$500)

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

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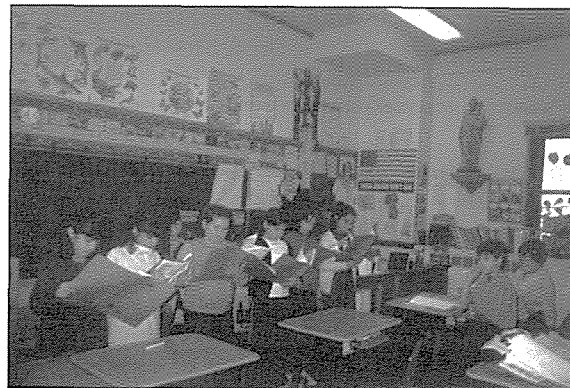
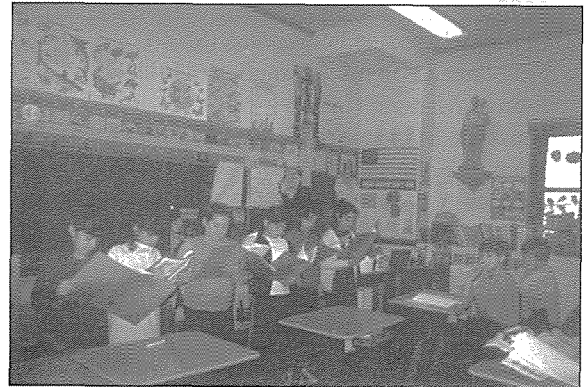
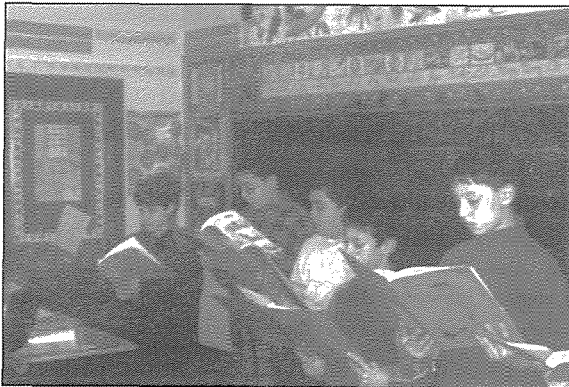
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Your donation will be used to support *Aurora* Youth Scholarships, *The Italic Way* Magazine, and Anti-Defamation Activities (*Project Italia*).

### ***AURORA SURVIVES***

It is indicative of a strong organization if it can sustain itself through economic downturns. Without missing a beat, the Italic Institute found the means to carry on its mission of transmitting our cultural heritage to another 400 youngsters. Under the leadership of the unstoppable Tony DeNonno, and with a lot of help from our friends and members, *Aurora* reached its goal of 16 classes. *Aurora* remains our strongest program: consistently excellent, unquestionably essential. Your investment will pay dividends years into the future. Also remember: few Italian American organizations are able to tap the public grant network as the Italic Institute does. Many organizations don't do anything worth the public's benefaction, and most would be discouraged by the time and paperwork. Interestingly, much of that public money is raised by taxes on hard-working Italian Americans. Isn't it good to know that you belong to the one organization that puts the money back where it came from?



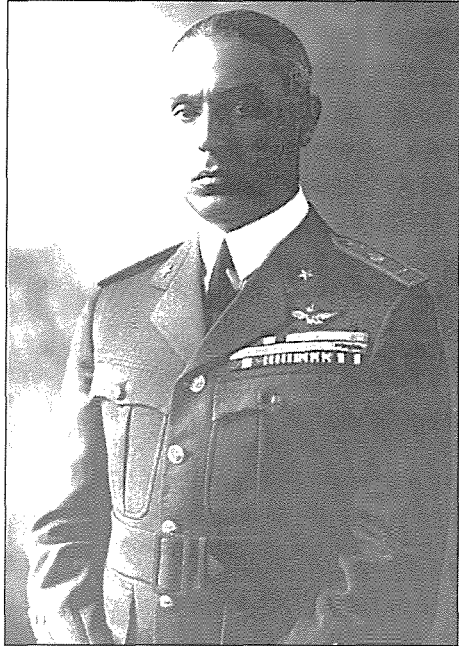
The *Aurora* class at St. Lucy School, Bronx, NY

Visit our website at

[www.italic.org](http://www.italic.org)

### CHICAGO CELEBRATION

As you may know, our media arm is called *Project Italia*. It is headed up by Don Fiore, an Institute Director living in Chicagoland. Don has had a passion for Italian aviation since his youth. It has taken him years, but America will soon reacquaint itself with **Colonel Francesco De Pinedo**, the golden boy of the *Regia Aeronautica Italiana*



**Col. Francesco De Pinedo**

(Royal Italian Air Force) and the first foreign pilot to fly to the United States. It was in 1927, the same year that Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic.

On May 15th, a ceremony at Richard J. Daley Center will reintroduce America to its Italian past. Don fired the imagination of Italy's Consul General in Chicago, Enrico Granara, and local organizations to celebrate De Pinedo's 75th anniversary voyage. Don not only supplied the inspiration and the documentation but his traditional Neapolitan band will provide entertainment.

Don Fiore is another example of the leadership of the Italic Institute of America, leaders that not only lead but educate. Our researchers know more about the Italian heritage than all the other organizations put together. With proper funding, the Institute could turn the media upside down.

### 15th ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

June 27th will be the day to present our Silver Medallion to some great Americans. This year's honorees are:

**Joseph Persico** (author of *FDR's Secret War*)

**Donald Bellisario** (television producer of *First Monday* and *JAG*)

**Dr. Anthony Fauci** (head of the U.S. Infectious Disease Institute)

**Samuel Palmisano** (CEO of IBM Corporation)

**The Sbarro Family** (international restaurateurs)

**Lawrence Auriana** (Chairman of the Federated Kaufmann Fund)

The event will again be held at the prestigious Columbus Club in Manhattan and will feature our *Aurora* Color Guard. A luncheon will follow the ceremony. Contact our office for tickets or to place an ad in our Awards Journal: 516.488.7400. Some honorees may not be present.

**MEMORIAL DONATION**

The Institute gratefully acknowledges a generous  
donation from Maria C. Poulos  
in memory of Louis Caterine and Louis Caterine, Jr.

**NEW MEMBERS**

We welcome the following new members to the Institute:

Josefina Acosta	Smithtown, NY	Mr./Mrs. Eric Johnston	Kings Park, NY
Mr./Mrs. Joseph Adduci	Kings Park, NY	Mr./Mrs. James Lambert	Smithtown, NY
Mr./Mrs. Frank Albergo	Kings Park, NY	Maria LoPresti	W. Hempstead, NY
Richard Barvels	Pacifica, CA	Mr./Mrs. C. Marino	Islip Terrace, NY
Jerry & Norma Benicasa	Walnut Creek, CA	Mr./Mrs. Kenneth Mealey	Kings Park, NY
Neil Bisciello	New Hyde Park, NY	Frank Messina	Deer Park, NY
Chris Borsella	Riverhead, NY	Mr./Mrs. Pablo Oviedo	Kings Park, NY
Nancy Brinkley	Little Rock, AR	Mr./Mrs. Albert Palmato	Kings Park, NY
Cindy Commins	Northport, NY	Andrew Pampuro	Laguna Woods, CA
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Mr./Mrs. John Galletta	Palm Coast FL	Patrick M. Rappa	New Hyde Park, NY
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Allison Gencarelli	Kings Park, NY	Patrick A. Rugiero	Milan, MI
Connie Gentile	New Hyde Park, NY	Laura Schoenberg	New Hyde Park, NY
Paul Gianguercio	Woodside, NY	Mr./Mrs. John Seaman	Kings Park, NY
Anthony Giannone	Chicago, IL	Mr./Mrs. Adelio Simoes	Ft. Salonga, NY
Marie A. Goldstein	Kings Park, NY	Vito A. Speziale	Vero Beach, FL
Eric A. Halls	Elmont, NY	Dean Tomasula	Hoboken, NJ
Theresa M. Holland	Ft. Walton Beach, FL	Vendo, Ltd.	E. Northport, NY
Rev. Johnny Itty	W. Hempstead, NY	Thomas Verderosa	W. Hempstead, NY

**WE NEED NEW MEMBERS!**

You can do your part by reading the enclosed brochure and passing it on to a friend or family member who is interested in preserving the real Italian heritage.

Remember, the Italic Institute is the alternative to apathy and media fiction.



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It is important that we support our Italian-American Press, especially these days when our heritage is being threatened by those who seek to re-write history.

*L'Italo American* 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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### April Almanac

**April 8** - Jurist **Pasquale Fiore** is born in 1837. His expertise and writings about international law had a profound influence on the legal systems of all Latin countries in Europe and the Americas.

**April 9** - British engineer **Sebastian Ferranti** is born in 1864. He promoted and oversaw the development of England's AC power grid.

- **Enrico Tonti** and Robert LaSalle reach the mouth of the Mississippi River in 1682. LaSalle was later murdered by his French crew. Thereafter, Tonti spent 25 years developing middle America, which eventually was sold to the United States as the Louisiana Purchase.

**April 11** - Italian military aviator **Renato Donati** sets the high altitude record of 47,352 feet in 1934.

**April 13** - Italian-American inventor **Antonio Meucci** is born in 1808. Living in Staten Island, NY, Meucci files the first papers for his teletrofono (telephone) five years before Alexander Graham Bell.

**April 14** - **Topo Gigio**, the Italian mouse, premieres on the *Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964.

**April 16** - Composer **Henry Mancini** is born in 1924. His hits included *The Pink Panther Theme*, *Moon River*, and *Days of Wine and Roses*.

- Italian monk **Giovanni Francesco Bernardone** founds the Franciscan Order in 1209.

**April 17** - **Giovanni da Verrazzano** is the first European to enter New York Harbor in 1524, eighty-five years before Henry Hudson.

**April 21** - The city of **Rome** is founded in 753 B.C. She later became the creator of the nation-state of Italy.

**April 15** - Inventor of wireless telegraphy, **Guglielmo Marconi**, is born in Bologna in 1875.

**April 26** - Italy signs the **Secret Treaty of London** in 1915 in which France and Britain promises Italy overseas colonies in return for its participation in the First World War. The Allies reneged on the pledge even after Italy defeated Austria-Hungary and lost 600,000 servicemen.

**April 27** - Heavyweight boxer **Rocky Marciano** retires undefeated in 1956.

**April 30** - Freedom fighter **Romolo Gessi** is born in 1831. This soldier/explorer led numerous expeditions for the British in Africa freeing 30,000 slaves from bondage.

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