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The Officers' Log

COLUMBUS FOUNDATION RESPONDS

The New York State Bureau of Charities has demanded that the Columbus Citizens Foundation (CCF) respond to the Italic Institute's complaint against it.

There has now been an exchange of correspondence between the CCF and our Institute, something that never happened during the years of our polite appeals to that Foundation.

"There are serious issues involved here," observes John Mancini, Chairman of our Council of Governors. "Unfortunately, the Foundation considers our heritage its private domain."

Our Institute contends that the Foundation is not fulfilling its corporate mission to promote the Italian heritage and culture. Millions of dollars are spent on cash scholarships rather than Italian language classes, museums, cultural centers, bands and other heritage projects. Foundation tax returns indicate that the few grants to cultural and heritage

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AMERICAN HERO

HBO's new series *The Pacific* is about the brutal campaign against the Japanese during World War II. The storyline follows three actual Marines from stateside to the epic battles of the Pacific war. One of those Marines was Medal of Honor winner Sgt. John Basilone (above). This may be one of the few positive portrayals of Italian Americans in the media in recent memory, mainly because it is based on reality.

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NO AP TESTS FOR 2010

For the second year, there will be no Advanced Placement Italian language tests in U.S. high schools. The College Board refuses to restore the AP tests until someone comes up with \$3 million for a new 3-year cycle.

What was thought to be an eleventh-hour save by an umbrella association of Italian American groups has produced only vague commitments. The starting point was a pledge by the Italian government to match \$1.5 million from our community. NIAF, in turn, offered \$500,000 as a "matching grant." Does that mean NIAF is writing a check that will be matched by the Italian government? Or is NIAF playing a separate match game? The Sons of Italy has gone on record pledging only \$75,000 - \$150,000. There are no announcements from UNICO or from the Columbus Citizens Foundation. Is everyone starting to realize that \$3 million is serious money to subsidize a few high school test takers?

For the College Board it is simple arithmetic. Its overhead is paid from fees

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Graduates of our Advanced (left) and Introductory Aurora Heritage Programs on Long Island. Aurora is a unique blend of language, history, and culture. These classes were sponsored by members Lisa Carcaterra, Steve Napolitano and Cellini Lodge. Aurora is a logical way to create demand for the Italian language in schools.

SUSTAINING THE CAUSE

Guardians of the Italian Heritage (\$1,000 +)

Lisa Carcaterra & Steven Napolitano
B.T. Giminiani

Sustainers of the Institute (\$100 +)

Carla Paterno-Darlington
George P. Ricci
Charles Sclafani
Dr. Joseph L. Tromba
John G. Villanella

Supporters of the Institute (\$50 +)

Camille Annichiarico
S.M. Apollo
Dr. Anthony C. Bottone
Joel Catania
Charles J. Cerutti
William J. Dal Cerro
Joseph E. DiPirro Family
Mario Ignagni
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Maresca
Carlo Sclafani
Richard Vannucci

Friends of the Institute (\$25 +)

Dr. Joseph A. Crapotta
Armand Fama
Rosa Giglia
Gino Reali

QUICK TRIP TO ITALY

by Bill Dal Cerro, President



While traveling in Italy recently, I took the 90 minute train ride from Venice to Bologna. Unlike my last trip — where I was practically the only European in the car (albeit an American one), surrounded by Third World immigrants to Italy — this time there were more than a few native-born Italians on board. As the train pulled out, a

young Chinese woman began making call after call on her cell phone, literally talking non-stop during the entire ride. In that moment, the current culture clash talked about in Italy suddenly became palpable: As the woman spoke, her voice rising and falling in loud, jarring Asian tonalities, I observed the Italians on the train either rolling their eyes upward or putting their hands over their ears in despair. Clearly, the jangling vibrations of the Chinese language are out-of-tune in *la bell'italia*. Multiculturalism is fast overtaking Italy and Europe.

Shouldn't There Be More to the Italian Heritage Than Galas?

Of course there is! But, you need to link up with the right people. Broaden and deepen your knowledge of the Italian heritage. Let us show you the difference between the Classical Italian Heritage and the superficial version.

We are the Alternative.

___ Enroll me as a member (\$50 check enclosed)

___ Enclosed is a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Italic Institute of America
PO Box 818
Floral Park, NY 11002

Tel: (516) 488-7400 Fax: (516) 488-4889

Email: ItalicOne@aol.com Website: Italic.org

THE PUBLIC TROUGH

Here at a glance is a sampling of New York State's "member items" for the two years 2008-2010. These are grants distributed by state assemblymen and senators to groups in their districts. Despite a current budget deficit of \$9 billion, the politicians are conducting business as usual. The total giveaway is approximately \$170 million per annum. Most of the money goes to civic projects such as fire departments and public schools. Nevertheless, various charitable empires depend on their yearly taxpayer stipend. These figures were tallied via www.seethroughny.net, a watchdog group.

Many of these same groups also have access to federal "earmarks" from U.S. senators and representatives. Note - Each listing represents a rough compilation of associations and charitable agencies operating mainly for the benefit of that group.

Jewish, ...\$11,456,510	African1,931,850
Catholic.....3,917,425	Gay, Lesbian..1,765,000
Hispanic.... 3,799,598	Italian1,212,700
Asian.....2,172,208	Irish221,500
	Greek 97,500

A MOST HONORABLE FAMILY

In a previous issue of the *Italic Way Magazine* (issue XXXIV, 2008), we profiled the Cuneo family of Chicago, a distinguished name in Windy City social circles dating back to the Civil War era. The Cuneos were early entrepreneurs and real estate magnates, and even counted Bank of America founder A.P. Giannini as a relative-through-marriage (A.P. married Clorinda Agnes Cuneo).

The Cuneo name will continue to live on thanks to John Cuneo, Jr (pictured). Last December, Cuneo donated his family's sprawling, 31,000 acre estate in the northern suburbs to Loyola University, a Jesuit-run college in Chicago. Already the previous beneficiary of Cuneo's generosity (the school received \$14 million in 2000), this latest gift, encompassing both the estate as well as 100 acres of nearby land, is estimated to be worth a cool \$50 million dollars. Loyola will still allow public tours and events in the mansion and may also, in the future, use the grounds as a satellite site for school-related classes.



Like the Medicis during the Renaissance, the Cuneos and other wealthy Italian Americans — e.g., our deceased co-founder Carl Pescosolido who established a chair in Roman Studies at Harvard and sustained our Aurora Heritage Program — aren't shy about sharing their bounty.

We are proud that John Cuneo Jr. is a member of our Institute. We know he embraces the classical Italian heritage and wishes to see it restored in America.

American Hero from p.1

Sgt. Basilone, also known as "Machinegun" or "Manila" John, earned his country's highest award on Guadalcanal. The War Department brought him home to sell war bonds and inspire the nation. Basilone could have remained safely at home but begged to return to his comrades. His wish was granted but it cost him his life on the beach at Iwo Jima.

At least now his incredible life and sacrifice are documented for all America to see. ****

ITALY IS NOT A P.I.G.

by Rosario A. Iaconis, Vice Chairman East

Though Greece has plunged the European Union into a monetary (and identity) crisis as a result of the Hellenic republic's decades of unrestrained profligacy, the media wasted no time in tarring Italy.

Excoriating Greece's lack of fiscal prudence was long overdue; but the accompanying assault on *il bel paese* smacks of nothing so much as thinly disguised Italophobia.

Comparing the Magic Boot, a founding member of the G-7 and the world's fifth largest industrial democracy, to a hardscrabble state in the southern Balkans borders on the illogical. What's more, Italy does not belong to the barnyard tier of Europe: Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain disdainfully labeled the P.I.I.G.S.

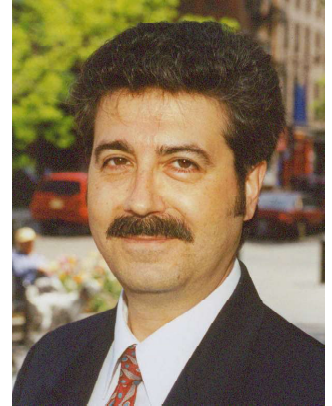
Italy's GDP dwarfs that of Greece — as well as Portugal's and Ireland's. The Italian economy of 57 million boasts advanced aerospace, automotive and environmental industries (and a burgeoning solar energy sector). Greece's counterparts are, well, less than Olympian, as one would expect of a small nation with a population of only 11 million.

Additionally, the Italian economy has recently achieved a second *sorpasso* of Britain. Indeed, though joblessness has increased of late, Italy's unemployment rate is below that of the European Union and the United States. Spain's unemployment rate hovers at nearly 20 percent.

Moreover, according to economists at Credit Agricole (Europe's largest retail bank), Italy has the lowest public finance related risk — among members of a group including Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain — by virtue of its superior fiscal status and recent structural pension reforms. Italy's personal savings rate is 17% compared to only 9% in Greece and 10% in the USA. Italians understand sacrifice.

Clearly, Greece's recklessness has made it the moribund man of Europe. The Italians should not be lumped into the same fiscal moussaka.

Though Germany's Angela Merkel has been condescendingly cruel to the Greeks, the EU and the IMF have now decided to rescue Athens. Hopefully, the European Union in won't be going to Hellas in a handbasket. ****





Columbus, from p. 1

applicants mostly stopped in 2003. The major recipient of the Foundation's generosity (averaging \$1 million per year) is the Archdiocese of New York for parochial school scholarships. The Foundation has also given \$1 million to a city high school with few Italian American students where only Spanish and Mandarin are offered. The Intrepid Aircraft Carrier Museum has also been given a \$285,000 grant.

"Promoting *italianita`* is the mission," states Vice Chairman Rosario Iaconis. "Indeed, an annual Columbus Day Parade is not a substitute for grassroots heritage building."

In his response to our Chairman John Mancini, Foundation President Frank Fusaro defended its considerable non-Italic donations stating, "You may disagree but we consider ourselves Americans of Italian heritage." Mancini replied that Fusaro's "better-American-than-thou" attitude harkened back to the Foundation's original corporate filing of 1944. That filing, made at the height of World War II, made no mention of being Italian Americans or the Italian heritage. But that filing was revised in 1982 and the words "scholarships" and "Americanism" were specifically deleted. Instead, the "Italian heritage and culture" featured prominently. "The Foundation is still living in 1944," asserts Mancini.

Our President Bill Dal Cerro observes, "In promoting an open dialogue, we believe the IIA has written a new chapter in Italian American history. The hope is that a frank exchange of ideas will halt the downward spiral of our heritage."

AP Tests, from p. 1

charged to students who take the tests. (Passing a high school AP test earns the student college credits). The Italian AP does not have enough takers to pay its cost, hence the need for our community to make up the deficit. Italian American leaders and academics subscribe to a supply-side AP philosophy – offer it and the students will come. In truth, only 2,200 students nationwide took the 2008 tests. Five to ten thousand students were what the College Board expected.

The Italian government has already been burned by supply-side academics. You would think they learned a lesson. For a decade now the Italians have pumped hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants to selected American high schools to support Italian courses. These IACE (Italian American Committee on Education) grants have helped pay teacher salaries. Still, only 2,200 students took the Italian AP. Why?

Without greater student demand, the Italian AP is an ego trip that will eat up millions to keep it alive. Perhaps someday the major organizations will turn their resources to heritage programs for the millions of Italian American children who know precious little about our ancestral language and culture. Until that sea-change in thinking occurs we are reaping what we have sown. ****



Arturo Di Modica, the Italian American artist whose bronze bull adorns New York's Financial District was commissioned by the Chinese to replicate same in Shanghai, only fiercer. The move reflects Chinese financial power in the 21st Century.

COLUMBIA TO RESPOND TO OUR REQUEST

The Charities Bureau (Office of the Attorney General) of New York State has called on Columbia University to reply to our Institute's request for documents relating to the 1990 sale of La Casa Italiana (above). The university must either provide the documentation or explain why not.

Our Institute initiated this action on behalf of the Paterno Family, descendants of the 1927 donors of La Casa Italiana. The 6-story Renaissance palazzo was the very first Italian cultural center in the nation to be erected and donated by Italian Americans. Columbia operated the center with an endowment fund also provided by the Italian American community. In 1990, financial strains and the need for major renovations prompted the university to sell the property to the Italian government. Curiously, the university did not seek approval from the Paterno Family descendants.

In order to apprise the Attorney General of the Paterno Family's rights, our Institute provided evidence of a recent ruling against Princeton University. In that case, Princeton was ordered to pay \$100 million in litigation costs and restoration to a donor's descendants. A university cannot ignore or subvert the original intent of a gift.

La Casa Italiana is the largest of only a handful of Italian American cultural centers in the nation. Our Institute contends that it no longer serves the practical needs of our community, that it is an academic ivory tower.