



# The Officers' Log

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## 2,000 YEARS

Every ethnic group has its great leaders of yore. For the English it may be crusader Richard the Lion-Hearted. For the Jews, King Solomon the Wise. For the Germans,



Prussian soldier Frederick the Great. For the Chinese, it's Confucius or Emperor Chi'n, the unifier.

We Italics may think of Giuseppe Garibaldi or St. Francis. It isn't often that we reach

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## WORD'S OUT

*Poco a poco* as the Italians say ("little by little") our officers and members are getting the word out.

Our Chairman Rosario Iaconis has quite a reputation at the *New York Times*. He recently contacted Clyde Haberman, a long-time journalist there, to question a half-page interview with self-appointed "Mob" expert Jerry Capeci. Haberman wrote: *"I fully expected to be hearing from you (Rosario) this time, I wasn't disappointed... [Capeci believes] no other ethnic group has been able to entrench itself in organized*

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## KEEP US GOING!

It's that time again as our Institute gears up for the coming year. We have enclosed a return envelope for your dues. Same as last year \$50, payable to the Italic Institute of America.

Your support makes a difference. Even though our officers are unpaid volunteers we



still need stationery, computers, copiers, postage, internet, printing, and tech people to carry on our mission. Our home offices mean the Institute pays no heating or electric bills.

Speaking of mission, we are now in our 27<sup>th</sup> year preserving and promoting the classical Italian heritage. That includes defending that heritage in the press, in Hollywood, and among some of our own people. It also means building a foundation of documents and expanding research. You can share the fruit of our labors in *The Italic Way* magazine and at our website *italic.org*.

Asks President Bill Dal Cerro, "Who else does what we do? Who else has done it

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## PIZZA-GATE



Which was the bigger faux pas?  
Eating pizza with a fork or patronizing a pizzeria named Goodfellas?

New York's rookie mayor Bill de Blasio is already taking it on the chin for his "un-Italian" mannerisms. Hizzoner traveled to Goodfellas Pizzeria on Staten Island for a few slices. But he caused a media stir when he used a knife and fork to eat his first piece. He was given incredulous looks by fellow customers, and even by the owner, who claim it's customary to use one's hands to deliver pizza to the mouth.

When questioned by the media

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# YOUR GENEROSITY

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Steven Napolitano & Lisa Carcaterra

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Patrons of Italian Heritage (\$250 +)  
Gennaro Pupa

Sustainers of the Institute (\$100 +)  
Dona De Sanctis Bracone  
Vincent J. Pizzulli

Supporters of the Institute (\$50 +)  
Robert A. Masullo  
Wanda C. Savona

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## ENRICH YOUR PASSION FOR ITALIC STUDIES

Visit our website at *italic.org*. You can catch up on previous issues of *The Italic Way Magazine* or time-travel back to the 1930s with *Atlantica Magazine*. Our Galleria Italica has exclusive Institute videos that chronicle our Italian legacy. Why go to a movie?

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### Nobody Does it Better!

Few organizations have our unique perspective on heritage. Even fewer have the depth and scope to satisfy your intellect.

### We are the Alternative!

Enroll the person below as a member (\$50 check enclosed)  
 Renew my membership for 2014 (\$50 check enclosed)  
 Enclosed is a tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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# UPDATES

**La Casa Italiana** issue continues to be in the hands of the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau. Our complaint against Columbia University has not been ruled on, as yet. There are enough serious questions in our complaint to warrant due diligence on the AG's part. Columbia would have to provide proof that it was granted permission by the AG to sell *La Casa Italiana* in 1990. Furthermore, we question the disposition of two endowment funds given to Columbia by Italian Americans for *La Casa* but not accounted for. Stay tuned.

**CBS-TV** never responded to our complaints about anti-Italian defamation on *CSI Vegas* and the *Mike & Molly* sitcom. Thus far, we have gone up the chain of command starting with writers, directors, the so-called Vice President of Diversity and CBS President Nina Tassler. Letters have now been sent to two members of the CBS Corporation Board: Frederic Salerno and Joseph Califano. Salerno was the former CEO of Verizon and Califano was Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under President Lyndon Johnson. Both are Italian Americans. Each owns some 40,000 shares of CBS stock and earns about \$250,000 for serving on the Board. Board members certainly have an oversight mandate. CBS's mission statement includes the following quote: "[to carry] socially responsible messages into its programming." Dialogue in a prime time comedy show should not include a line like "I'd take a bullet for this wop."

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### Word's Out, from p. 1

*crime the way those with Italian roots have...But I will leave you to debate that with him.*" Capeci is just one of many who keeps the "Mob" a daily media event.

President Bill Dal Cerro also cultivates relationships with the media. A tribute to Bill's effectiveness came from journalist Stephan Benzkofer of the *Chicago Tribune* this month. "*Bill, did you notice the item on Mother Cabrini that ran in '10 Things You Might Not Know About Immigration' a few weeks ago? The idea came from your [previous] message.*" Bill also managed to have a letter dealing with Italian American affairs printed in the *Washington Post*. Spanning the continent!

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### Keep Going!, from p. 1

longer than us? Who has been more faithful to its mission than our Institute?"

All of our officers wish you a healthy and prosperous New Year. And they thank you for being a part of the classical Italian movement.

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# Member Activities

On January 28th, Los Angeles sculptor **Will Pupa** unveiled his larger-than-life bronze statue of Saint Robert Bellarmino at Fairfield University in CT.

Will is the son of long-time Institute member Gennaro Pupa of California. Having studied sculpture in the United States and in Italy, Will is now Artist-in-Residence at Loyola Marymount



**Will Pupa is pictured with his clay model.**

University in LA. He won the design competition over five other artists.

St. Bellarmino is the patron saint of Fairfield University. His theological writings were the foundation for the Church's response to the Protestant reformation. The statue was designed in clay and cast in bronze using the ancient lost wax process. It stands 7' 6" tall, weighing 900 lbs.

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Chicago member **Frank DiPiero**'s day job is operating a family diner. But some nights he hosts a local radio show dealing with Italian American affairs. Recently he gathered some community leaders, including our own President Bill Dal Cerro, to discuss the need for an Italian American Studies Program at Loyola University.



**Frank DiPiero (l) hosts Institute President Bill Dal Cerro along with other Italian American leaders in Chicago.**

# Remembering Martin Luther King



**Dr. Naclerio visits his patient in 1958.**

January is Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday celebration. In a recent *NY Times* obituary of African American Dr. John Cordice, he is credited with helping to save the life of Dr. King in 1958, after the civil rights activist was knifed by a woman in Harlem. The article mentions that Dr. Cordice's partner was thoracic surgeon Emil Naclerio, an Italian American. For many years, Dr. Aubrey Maynard, the Chief of Surgery, received most of the credit for saving King's life, even though Cordice and Naclerio actually performed the surgery. Naclerio died in 1985.

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## **Pizza-Gate**, from p. 1

about his strange technique, de Blasio informed them that his numerous trips to Italy taught him to eat pizza the Italian way rather than the American way. Still, de Blasio has been roundly condemned for not setting a good Italian American example.

Comments Institute Chairman Rosario Iaconis, "*Mayor de Blasio's only blunder was frequenting a pizzeria named after a degrading Mob movie. This silly episode demonstrates the robust cluelessness of some sausage-and-pepper proletarians.*"

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## **Augustus - 2,000 Years**, from p. 1

back to classical Italy. But the year 2014 marks the 2,000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Caius Octavian, known to history as Caesar Augustus. Few Italians and fewer Italian Americans realize his importance in our lives today.

The Italic Institute will celebrate the life of this remarkable man whose name remains with us in the month of August, the holiday of *ferragosto*, and even Augusta, the capital of Maine. He is an essential part of our classical heritage. All that Italy means to us began with him. Let's all learn more about his legacy.

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## Alioto & Look

Forty-five years ago, in 1969, the now defunct *Look* magazine published an article linking then-San Francisco mayor Joseph Alioto to organized crime. The article reported that Alioto provided “Mafia” leaders with loans, legal services, and business counsel for fees and campaign contributions.

By coincidence, Alioto was also a respected and renowned anti-trust lawyer who knew the court system well. He considered the article an ethnic slur and brought libel suit against *Look*. At the trial, Alioto proved that *Look*, on the verge of bankruptcy, had fabricated an alleged mob meeting. He also revealed evidence indicating that the Nixon Administration leaked disinformation to the magazine in order to derail his career. At the time, Alioto was a rising star in the Democratic Party and was being considered as a possible challenger to the reelection of California Governor Ronald Reagan. The trial vindicated Alioto and he was awarded a \$450,000 judgment. *Look* magazine later folded.

On this anniversary, it’s important for us to recognize the significance of Alioto’s stunning victory. With the Valachi Hearings of 1963 and fresh on the heels of publication of *The Godfather* in 1969, the American media took for granted that an article tying an Italian American politician to the Mafia would not meet with any resistance. In their mind, the burden of proof was on the Italian American accused. But they didn’t count on Joseph Alioto, who was wealthy, powerful, and clearly a man of integrity.

Alioto’s record as San Francisco’s mayor was impressive. He presided over a time of tumult and change in San Francisco, events that included the conflict in the Haight-Ashbury district and its emerging drug culture; worsening anti-Vietnam War demonstrations; civil rights protests in the city’s gay Castro District; Black Panther rallies; as well as the notorious Zebra and Zodiac serial murders. On the positive side, Alioto championed the development of the Bay Area Rapid Transit

System (BART), the Transamerica Pyramid, and the Embarcadero Center.

It was no mystery why, a year before in 1968, Mayor Alioto was asked to deliver the nominating speech for Hubert Humphrey at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. There were also rumors circulating that Humphrey would pick Alioto as his running mate. (Eventually northeastern Edmund Muskie was chosen.)

He was one of the few Italian Americans to challenge a Mafia accusation, initiate a legal battle, and emerge victorious. Neither Geraldine Ferraro nor Mario Cuomo, both of whom were trailed by Mafia rumors, ever sought vindication in the courts. Joseph Alioto should be remembered as the man who called the media’s bluff.

At the dawn of *The Godfather*-era, a courageous son of Sicilian immigrants said no to yellow journalism. His story teaches us that bigotry and stereotyping were not merely directed at a select few groups, but also to Italian Americans. Alioto’s firm response, and vindication, is a vital lesson to us today.

- Anthony Vecchione, Vice President

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## Unglorious Past

The Sunday *Times* of January 12th featured an article by a professor of journalism about the classic Jacob Riis book, *How the Other Half Lives*. That book, with its shocking photographs of New York’s tenement dwellers in 1890, awakened America to urban poverty. Although Riis’s book showcased the degradation among Chinese, Jews, Poles and blacks with all the stereotypical comments of that era, the *Times* author chose the Italian example to illustrate his article, a dubious honor.



The home of an Italian ragpicker

*“The Italian has nevertheless the insinct of cleanliness but it is drowned by the nastiness of the tenements. Firmly managed he can be made a desirable tenant. (There is a difference, too, between the Southern and Northern Italian.)”*

-Jacob Riis

