



# The Officers' Log

Tel: (516) 488-7400 email: ItalicOne@aol.com Website: Italic.org

## LA CASA: A Stacked Deck

In September, we received final word from New York State's Charities Bureau that our complaints against Columbia University were dismissed. Our six-year struggle to restore the original mission of *La Casa Italiana*, a \$15 million palazzo donated by

the Italian American community to diffuse Italian culture, is all but finished.

"Both the state Supreme Court judge Marci Friedman and now Attorney General Eric Schneiderman have given us short-

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## WAS COLUMBUS POLISH?

We never heard of *Newsmax*, for Dish and Direct TV users, but when they called our office for an interview about Columbus, we took the bait. Our Executive Director John Mancini went to *Newsmax*'s Manhattan studio preparing to talk about the Staten Island, NY, Columbus Day parade being replaced with a cultural festival. Instead, he found himself confronted by a shock-jock host, Ed Berliner (left), and an author (center) who claims that

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## COLOMBO-PHOBIA

Good-bye Columbus?

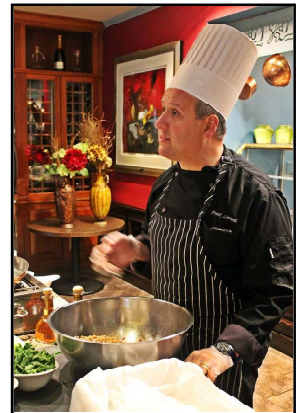
Christopher Columbus has become a hot potato for some Italian Americans. In places where nary a Native America can be found, Italian American leaders are replacing the Great Navigator with cooking demos and multiculturalism. The Columbus Day Parade up Fifth Avenue, Manhattan, which used to boast a Santa Maria float, now features nondescript flatbeds and a cement truck. Parade hosts Maria Bartiromo and Joe Piscopo waxed



Once upon a time Columbus Day, acknowledged a great nautical achievement. Nowadays, it's about cooking and crooning. Below, a chef at Staten Island's "deeper and richer" Italian festival.

nostalgic over multiculturalism and confused immigrant desperation with the genius and courage of Italian explorers.

"There is absolutely no excuse to throw Columbus overboard," argues Executive Director John Mancini. "Instead of caving in to any calls for a scapegoat-of-the-week, we should double down on Columbus and add Vespucci, Cabot, and Verrazzano as

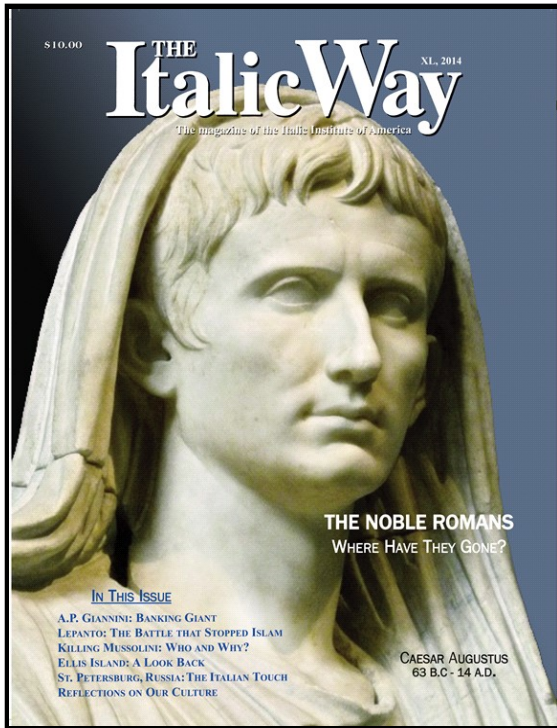


Team America. These guys put it all together."

The New York City borough of Staten Island has few Native Americans but over 175,000 Italian Americans. So when Institute member Anthony Barbaro found out that Borough President

# WATCH FOR IT!

The latest issue of *The Italic Way* magazine is in the mail. This issue commemorates the 2000th anniversary of the death of Augustus. But it's not all ancient history. There's a bio of American banking giant A.P. Giannini and our usual survey of current news and pivotal events.



## Got a Friend or Relative

who would appreciate our classical perspective?

We are not for everyone. Our members are the more discerning type. Their intellectual curiosity is a cut above most Americans.

But let's not keep the Italic Institute a secret.

## We are the Alternative!

- Enroll the person below as a member (\$50 check enclosed)
- Renew my membership for 2015 (\$50 check enclosed)
- Enclosed is a tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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**Italic Institute of America, PO Box 818,  
Floral Park, NY 11002  
516.488.7400 www.italic.org**

# DONATE?

It's that time of year for those of you who are looking for a charitable deduction on your 2104 taxes. As you know, charity begins at home.

Speaking of homes, we can't show you a photo of our "World Headquarters Building," because we don't have one. Unlike the big Italian American organizations we have little overhead – no mortgage, no rent, no staff, no conventions, no electric bills, no wine & cheese parties, and no expense accounts. We don't take your money and give it to non-Italic charities with prestigious addresses and celebrity spokesmen, and where only pennies actually to go research.

Your donation to the Italic Institute translates into pure action, 100% Italian action. Whether it's our operations as the only Italian American think-tank, or our struggles to preserve and promote your heritage, or our unique access to the media. Your donation is not wasted.

Think about that when you give away your hard earned dollars.

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## La Casa, from p. 1

shrift," explained Executive Director John Mancini. "The court doesn't consider the donor family, whom we represented, as having any rights; and now the AG rubberstamps Columbia's discriminatory policies."

Mancini explained that *La Casa's* director David Freedberg has effectively kept Italian Americans out of participation in the center. There are none on the Board or on the cultural staff, nor have they received fellowships. The building is closed to undergraduates on a daily basis and the Italian Language Dept. was removed years ago.

"Oddly enough," claims Mancini, "the assistant AG who handled our case, Rose Firestein, heads the Social Justice section at the Charities Bureau. "If this is what 'social justice' is all about they should give it a new name – ethnic exclusion."

Our Institute has now sent a final appeal to Governor Andrew Cuomo to order his Attorney General to reopen our complaint. "The question will be whether Cuomo wants to pull rank on Schneiderman, Firestein, and Freedberg," asks Mancini. "That's a tall order, but maybe the highest-ranking Italian American in New York State will somehow understand what's going on here."

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# ITALIAN AP: Still Struggling

The \$3 million investment by the Italian government and three major organizations has not yet met its goal for the high school Advance Placement tests in Italian. That goal is 2,500 student takers by 2015. This year's figure reached 2,331, up from 1,980 last year. Next year may be on target despite the elimination of Italian in many high schools around the country. In the seven years that the Italian AP has been offered, it has only broken 2,000 twice – this year and 2009 when the College Board stopped offering it. The College Board normally derives its income from the fee each student pays to take a test. Below a certain number, the Board either drops the test or asks for a subsidy from the respective nation/community. The Italian sponsors have now even offered to pay the student fees to encourage test-taking.

In the context of other language exams, Italian ranks next to last in AP tests, barely above Japanese - actually, only 20 students above Japanese. What accounts for Italian's poor showing in a nation of 20 million "Italian Americans?" It could be the absence of acculturation by parents or the inclination of students to try something new. Interestingly, almost twice as many girls take Italian as boys (1,457 vs. 874)

One thing is certain: beware of the spin many community leaders will put on these figures to justify the \$3 million investment. Italian is far from a world class language in the USA.

Spanish.....	135,341
French.....	21,268
Chinese.....	10,728
Latin.....	6,542
German.....	5,111
Italian.....	2,331
Japanese.....	2,311

## Columbus Polish? from p.

Columbus was actually Polish. Mancini considered the host's questions, among them: "Isn't it true Columbus never discovered America, only some islands?" absurd and picayune. As for the book about Columbus' Polish origins, Mancini was only shown a Polish language copy. "I spoke with the author off-camera and his thesis is in the same league as similar claims by Greeks, Jews, and Catalans. However, Polish is a new one for us."

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# OUR PRODUCTS IN ACTION

One of the reasons the Italic Institute was founded was to create the tools for a classical resurgence. As a think-tank we always need to be on the cutting edge of our community. Our national magazine is given complimentary to Italian American leaders and Italian diplomats. Our landmark reports such as the Institute's *Film Study* provide facts and statistics to combat media defamation. Here are some recent uses for our products:

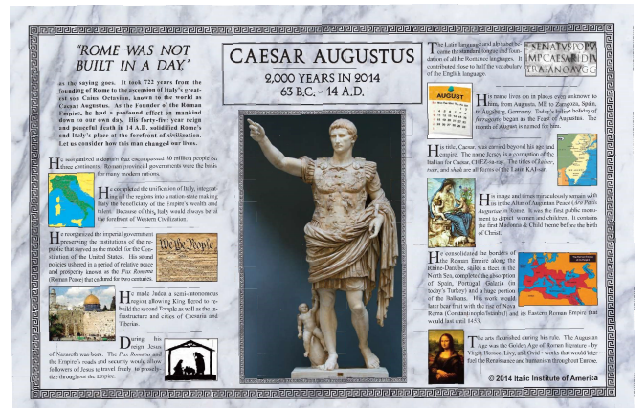
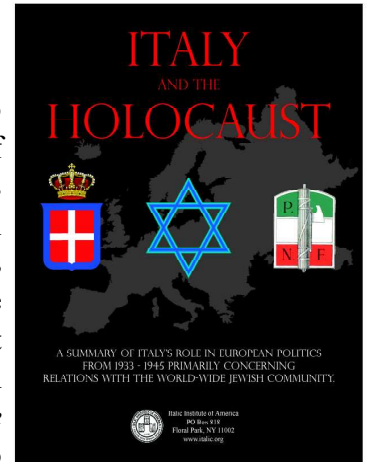
## CHICAGO PARADE THEME

Two of our members, Lou Rago and Robert Allegrini, were part of the committee to organize this year's Columbus Day Parade in Chicago. This year's theme was how Italians saved Jews during the Holocaust. To underscore that theme Lou and Robert ordered ten copies of our 2013 *Italy and the Holocaust Report* to distribute to Chicago media. The result was positive media coverage of the event on local TV, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Chicago Sun-Times*, in which an editorial praised Italy's humanitarian deeds during the war.

Great work Lou and Robert!

## LATIN SERVED

Our *Augustus 2000 Placemat* was mailed out to Latin language classes in 250 high schools. Although we could not afford to reach all 1,000 Latin schools in America, we did make an impression. In all, 5,000 students were served in four states; among them, 280 Latin students at Catholic Chaminade High School on Long Island. Father Garrett Long wrote to tell us how the students enjoyed the easy-to-read lesson. Upscale Chaminade is the *alma mater* of former Senator Alfonse D'Amato, and telejournalists Bill O'Reilly and Sean Hannity.



## COLOMBO-PHOBIA, from p. 1

James Oddo and State Senator Diane Savino cancelled their annual Columbus Day Parade and replaced it with an Italian cultural festival, he contacted us to complain.

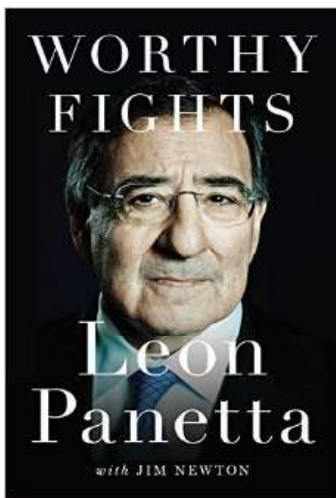
“The new festival wasn’t even called Columbus Fest,” relates Institute Governor Don Fiore. “It was mainly about cooking and wine tasting, with a little Mafia lore thrown in.” President Oddo claimed the new festival was “deeper and richer” than the parade. Says Fiore, “Deeper and richer than opening two continents?”

“Let’s be frank, good and bad came from Columbus’ voyages,” suggests Mancini. But folks should celebrate the opening of a New World to the peoples of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Most found success here, other found chains. Even the children of Italy were often maltreated and lynched in this Promised Land.”

In an op-ed piece in the *New York Daily News*, Institute Chairman Rosario Iaconis stated the IIA’s opposition to political leaders who have expunged Columbus. The article suggested several ideas for enhancing Columbus Day instead of gutting it. [See the insert for a copy.]

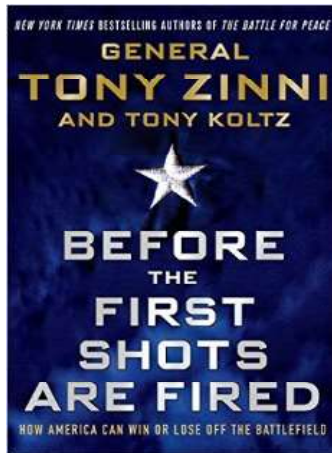
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## BOOKS OF INTEREST

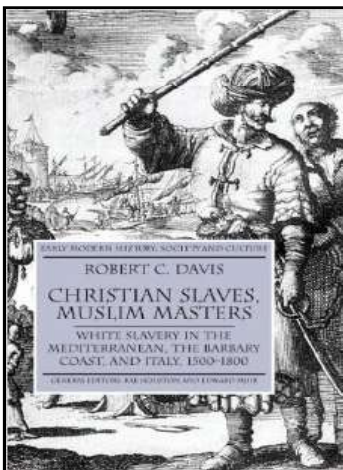


He made the cover of *The Italic Way*, (issue XXXVII). Now he’s come out with the story of his political struggles. You may not agree with everything Leon Panetta has said or did, but he is definitely someone America should listen to.

We honored General Anthony Zinni back in 1999 when he was Commander of Central Command (Middle East). He is a proud Italic who believes the U.S. needs more than weapons to win wars.



For those multiculturalists who think only Europeans wreaked havoc in the Muslim world, this book will show that jihad and beheadings aren’t new to “merciful” Islam. Italians were once its special target.



## RELENTLESS ITALICS

Here is an old photo of Institute member and researcher Peggy Fox with a true American hero, Louis Zamperini, when he visited Chicago. Zamperini was an Olympic champ as well as an Army Air Corps officer. His amazing life is the subject of the Hollywood film *Unbroken*, coming this December.



This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge connecting Brooklyn with Staten Island. It got its name only after activist John La Corte singlehandedly lobbied city, state and federal authorities. It put explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano back into America’s history



