



The Officers' Log

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WE LEND SUPPORT FOR COLUMBUS

It's a Team Effort

Supporting Columbus Day is now a 12-month a year operation. Revisionists around the country are hard at work subverting school boards, universities and whole cities. What they haven't done is to subvert the U.S. Congress, yet. But as the U.S. population gets more diverse, and both the media and politicians pander to the "flavor-of-the-month," our awesome European legacy is being steadily eroded.



Los Angeles will shortly vote on whether to replace Columbus Day, as Seattle and Minneapolis have done, with an Indigenous Peoples Day.

As one Indian activist claims, "[Columbus] represents the mascot of

American colonialism in the Western Hemisphere. And so it is time that we change a myth of history."

On Long Island, NY, our Institute was asked to support
cont'd on p.2

LA CASA: SILENT TREATMENT

Italians Forget Their Manners

A major component of our Casa Italiana dispute at Columbia University is the Italian government. While Columbia operates the facility under the iron hand of Director David Freedberg, the building is actually owned by the Italian Republic.



**New York Consul General
Francesco Genuardi**

"The Italians have locked horns with Freedberg a number of times," relates Executive Director John Mancini. *"And each time, he has sent them packing, claiming they are interfering with academic freedom."*

But the Italians have every right to appoint half the Board members that oversee the Italian Academy within *La Casa*. The Italic Institute has recently submitted the

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TAX EXEMPT BIGOTRY?

The sale of *La Casa Italiana* at Columbia University to the Italian government in 1990 was contingent on one thing - that the multi-million dollar property would be exempt from property tax.

To insure that benefit, the NYS legislature amended the tax law to allow a foreign owner of academic property to enjoy the

standard tax exemption.

One of the sponsors of that bill was State Senator Ken LaValle (left). *"I am scheduled to meet with LaValle this month,"* says Executive Director John Mancini *"to ask why that exemption should continue if the university discriminates against Italian Americans."*

YOUR GENEROSITY

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Columbus Effort, from p.1

the Sons of Italy fight to retain Columbus Day in the Southampton School District. We sent registered letters to each Board member informing them that the holiday is a celebration of exploration and joining two worlds, not an insult to Native Americans. The Board will take up the matter again in August.

As Executive Director John Mancini recounts, "*We also sent a thank you note and copy of our brochure "Why Columbus Day" to State Senator Weill of Utah, who rebuffed Indian activists wanting to rename the holiday. The Utah legislature voted against any change to the holiday.*"

In Colorado, that state legislature also killed an attempt to subvert the holiday last month.

Asserts Governor Don Fiore, "*All objective citizens who base their beliefs on facts rather than shrill revisionist hyperbole should voice concern over any radical debasement of Columbus, whether by government or in the classroom. What Columbus accomplished for humanity must not be erased in favor of a socio-political witch hunt.*"

La Casa, from p.1

name of prominent Italian American scholar and author Dr. Richard Gambino for appointment to that Board.

"*It's been almost two months since we contacted the new Italian Consul General Francesco Genuardi,*" explains Mancini. "*But we have yet to receive a reply.*"

Mancini feels that the word is out among Italian diplomats that the Italic Institute will only worsen their problems with Columbia. The Institute unsuccessfully sued Columbia in 2012.

"*The problem is not just about La Casa being hijacked by Freedberg,*" asserts Institute Advisor Alfred Cardone, "*it's that Italian Americans are absent from the staff, the Board, and the Fellowships. It's uncanny!*"

Whether Consul General Genuardi will eventually take notice and recognize this abuse of Italian American civil rights remains of special interest to our Institute officers. "*Is there a meaningful relationship between our community and the Italians, or does it extend no further than wine and cheese receptions?*" asks Institute Governor Don Fiore.

Our President Visits Puglia

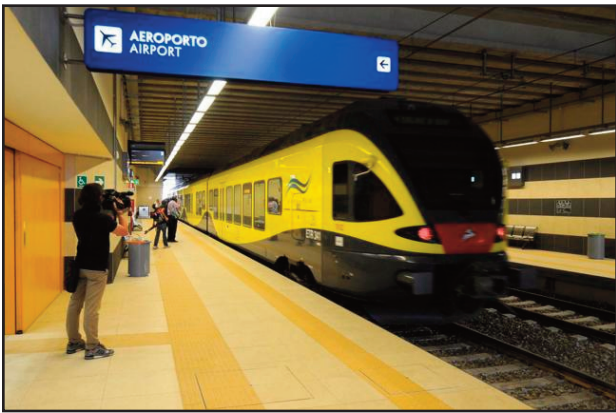


Our president, Bill Dal Cerro, right, took a six-day vacation to southern Italy in late March, specifically the Puglia region, home of *i trulli*, conical houses (below).

First up was Bari, the region’s capital, which boasts one of Italy’s most important central railway stations (below, left). “It also has a long Greco-Roman history,”

notes Dal Cerro. “The Via Appia, Rome’s most famous road, extends all the way to nearby Brindisi.”

Lecce, called by many “the Florence of the South,” is a very modern city, very much into architecture, particularly its own baroque style. A Roman theater is also located in the city’s center and is still being used. (bottom, left).



The president made a side trip to the adjoining

region of Basilicata (called Lucania by the Romans and Fascists) to visit Matera, the darling of movie-makers. Its ancient appearance and famous *citta` dei sassi* (City of Stones or Caves) is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site dating back over 7000 years, and was carved out of sheer rock. The city was the backdrop for Pasolini’s *Gospel According to St. Matthew*, Mel Gibson’s *Passion of the Christ*, and for the forthcoming remake of *Ben Hur* (bottom, right). Matera has also been selected as a European Cultural Capital for 2019, thus increasing its visibility even more on the world stage.

This was Dal Cerro’s first venture into Italy’s South. “I found the Puglia region to be just as fascinating and diverse as the rest of Italy. And yes, the food, gelato, and people were equal to any other parts of Italy that I’ve visited. And the trains still run on time! Unlike many areas of northern Italy, I didn’t see street peddlers, nor Kentucky Fried Chicken stores. There are a few McDonald’s, and I spotted a Pizzeria/Kebab joint - a sign of the times in Europe these days.”



WIKIPEDIA PROGRESS

Wikipedia is an on-line encyclopedia created and maintained by “the people.” Most of the information it contains is genuine but, like all media, it is not free of editorial bias.

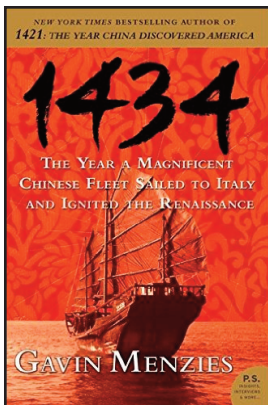
The Italic Institute is fortunate to have member Mario Ignagni of Minnesota to help us deal with Wiki editors. “History is too important to be left to historians, or editors, to paraphrase an old



French Prime Minister,” suggests Executive Director John Mancini. In that regard, Mancini and other officers regularly check Wikipedia entries for accuracy.

Mario was able to modify the Caesar Rodney entry (he was a signer of the Declaration of Independence) to cite *The Italic Way* as a source in documenting Rodney’s Italian roots. (see issue XLII)

This month, Mario spearheaded our efforts to balance the entries for *The Godfather* and *The Sopranos*. “We managed to rain on these Mafia triumphs,” reports President Bill Dal Cerro, “by showing how they were created on the backs of Italian stereotypes. Even our landmark Film Study is quoted, so visitors can see for themselves.”



PURE FICTION!

Institute Advisor Alfred Cardone found this 2008 book in the non-fiction section of the Manhattan Public Library. It purports to document how a Chinese fleet sailed into Venice in 1434 and revealed the secrets of the universe to the ignorant Italians, thereby launching the Renaissance.

One British reviewer called it “drivel,” and rightly so. There is absolutely no evidence of any Chinese fleet, or even a junk, sailing into Venice. The author, Scotsman Gavin Menzies, merely recounted Italian history and inserts a Chinese angle. Incredibly, the line between fiction and non-fiction is hazy. Books on space aliens, for

TERMITES AT WORK

“If you try to stop termites, is that a negative or positive thing to do?” asks Institute Vice President Tony Vecchione facetiously.

Vecchione uses the termite analogy to explain how relentless defamation has undermined the Italian heritage and how many misguided Italian Americans consider protesting defamation as a negative way to show Italian pride.

In Log #65 we reported on how Disney Studios included a Godfather shrew in *Zootopia*. Letters were sent to three Disney executives but none were answered. In San Jose, CA, member Ken Borelli reported a Symphony Silicon Valley orchestra concert in tribute to *The Godfather* in April. A major sponsor was Bank of America. Founder Amadeo Giannini must be spinning in his grave!



Termites are also at work throughout televisionland with endless repetitions of Mob movies, “reality” shows, and Mafia documentaries. “And don’t mention the Internet,” advises President Bill Dal Cerro. “I exchanged emails with a so-called Assyrian-American who posted a Youtube video titled ‘No Witness News’ (above), a parody with wiseguys, complete with all the neighborhood trappings. He became incensed when I suggested some Assyrian parodies. He then launched into a history of Assyrian greatness.”

It seems only Italic people accept ridicule graciously.

example, are considered non-fiction. But, “what if” (i.e., not a “claim”) books are fiction. Menzies also wrote *1421*, which claimed a Chinese fleet (the same one?) reached North America before Columbus - no evidence, but still non-fiction.

The problem with these books is that they were published by the mainstream press and libraries are validating them. Moreover, they pander to minorities who believe Europeans have covered up “real” history.

Although we have little hope of shaking up the publishing world, we want to see the kind of response we receive from a major library system. ****