



Cultural Italian American Organization
P.O. Box 1005
Auburn, NY 13021
www.CayugaCountyCIAO.org

Newsletter, March, 2026

Officers

Chairman

Paolo Saltarello

Co-Chairman

Tony Gucciardi

Secretary

Joseph Palmiotto

Recording Secretary

John "Jay" Elice, Jr.

Corresponding Secretary

Jo Anne Charles

Treasurer

Anna Saltarello

Financial Secretary

Dick Paulino

Trustees

Matteo Bartolotta

John Murtari

Arlene Ryan

Mike Vasco

Dr. Frank Vassallo

Sentinels

Giuseppe Casamassa

Sue Gatto

Public Relations

Mike Vasco

Chaplain

Father Paul Alciati

Chaplain Emeritus

Father Louis Vasile

Member-at-Large

Tony Tesoro

Monthly Newsletter

Ciao a tutti! Hello everyone!

Next meeting - Wednesday, March 4, 6:30 PM,

March meeting, si mangia!

As we do at each March meeting, to eliminate the blues of the season, several seasonal chefs will create their special "pasta sauce" and bring it to the meeting. Soon after the short meeting, those present will enjoy a dish of rigatoni pasta with the sauce(s) of their choice. The sauces will be numbered, and the maker will remain unknown. Ballots will be passed out to members, and after tasting any/all they may be interested in, they will place their completed ballot with their favorite into the ballot box, to be counted by the Social Committee, and the "CIAO Sauce Maker's Night 2026 People's Choice Award" medal will be awarded to this year's winner. It is a fun, competitive event, with lots of smiles for the winning "cuoco" chef. At press time, the members who offered their special sauce recipes are: Giuseppe and Donatina Casamassa, Tony Gucciardi,Carolynn and John Jr. Elice, Felix Mucedola, Frank DeOrio, Beth Liberatore, Paolo Saltarello, Anne Saltarello Febles, and, as the final entry, last year's winner, Mike "Pompierre" Vasco. Anyone else interested in joining these seasonal chefs is kindly asked to contact Lynda DeOrio at 315-277-0367 or Carolynn Elice at 315-252-8825 so we can be prepared.

Several friendly games of LCR were held at the February 4 meeting, and a great time was had by all. Thank you to Dr. Frank Vassallo and Frank DeOrio for donating their winnings to CIAO.

A reminder that dues are payable in January; we ask that you respond using the self-addressed stamped envelope if you were sent a dues reminder. Your continuous membership enables CIAO to remain strong and vital to our many projects assisting others in need.

Auburn's First Ever Crow-Caucus Convention

What was once an unwelcome visitor has inspired a lively new downtown celebration! CIAO proudly participated in Auburn's first-ever Crow-Caucus Convention — and it was *crow-licious!* We served chicken riggies, pasta fagioli, cannolis, cream puffs, and garlic pizza, with special thanks to Mamma Maria's Pizzeria for their garlic strips. Though not a fundraiser, the event was rewarding and provided great community exposure. As always, remaining food was shared with the Auburn Fire Department and Chapel House. Thank you to CIAO members who volunteered: Mike "Pompierre" Vasco (chicken riggies), Saltarellos (pasta fagioli), Annie Febles, Sue Gatto, Jo Anne Charles, Carolynn and John Elice, Jr., Antonia "Toni" Colella, and honorary Italiano Dr. John Ryan. *Tutto bene!* Afterward, the group celebrated John Elice's 23rd birthday at Osteria — *bravo, Gianni!*

Member News and Updates

Grazie, and many thanks for the ongoing support of CIAO by Paul Vitale of Hume Lane, and Matteo Bartolotta. Matteo was recently recognized as a Community Champion by Auburn Community Hospital. On February 11, President & CEO Scott Berlucchi and Board Chair Anthony Franceschelli presented Matteo with a formal Board Resolution in acknowledgment of his lifelong dedication to Auburn Community Hospital and the greater community. The Board of Trustees recognized not only his unwavering support of the Hospital but also the kindness, passion, and commitment he has demonstrated throughout his years of service, stating that his efforts reflect the highest ideals of community partnership and leadership. We wish to add our thanks to Matteo as well for his continued support and the lasting impact he has made on the hospital and the Auburn community.

Bocce - Although it is still winter, plans still remain to have the Bocce season at the Owasco Town Bocce courts. The players are invited to contact Frank DeOrio and John Muratri with their interest to participate in this Roman Empire game that continues to be enjoyed by many bocce players.

CIAO Cucina Crew - The Cucina Crew will once again cook a pasta dinner for the Auburn Stingray swimming team. The event on Wednesday, March 18, will be for the team members and their families, who have always enjoyed the pasta and meatball dinners prepared and served by the CIAO Cucina Crew. Excellent!

With sympathy - Our deepest sympathy to the Giuidice family of Hastings, NY - Francesca and daughter Maria - in the loss of Giuseppe, on Saturday, February 21, 2026. The family have been wanting to join CIAO; the first meeting they attended was the February meeting with the LCR games. Unfortunately a week later Giuseppe had to be brought to the hospital for an emergency medical occurrence, that was very critical for Giuseppe to overcome, and then he was brought home for hospice care. The family lost Giuseppe at the age of 84. He emigrated from Pozzallo, Sicilia in 1965, in his profession as a painter. Giuseppe had many friends in Auburn including Angelo D'Angelo, Paolo and Anna Saltarello, and Giuseppe and Donatatina Casamassa. Giuseppe attended many CIAO functions with his family.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the family of Giuseppe Vitale, brother of CIAO member Salvatore "Sam" Vitale.

San Giuseppe Day – March 19

In Italy, March 19 is a day rich in faith, family, and tradition. It honors St. Joseph, the devoted foster father of the Child Jesus, and is also recognized as Father's Day throughout the country. The day is especially meaningful for all those named Giuseppe — or called Peppito, Peppe, or Peppeniello — and for Giuseppina — known as Peppinella, Pina, or Peppina. March 19 is their *onomastico*, or feast day, celebrated with the same joy as a birthday. In Italia, tradition holds that the celebrant becomes the host. Rather than being treated, the honored father or name-day celebrant graciously offers caffè, beverages, and pastries to family and friends — a contrast to the American custom. To all the Giuseppes and Giuseppinas, *Buon Onomastico*, Happy Feast Day!

Winter Olympics 2026 - Milano/Cortina

Sharing a note in support of Father Joseph Bonsu

Father Joseph Bonsu is in need of our love, prayers and yes, our financial support. CIAO's motto – *cultura and caritas*. For details, visit GoFundMe and search for "[Community Care for Father Joseph's Healing](#)," or click the link if you are receiving this via email, or make a check payable to Dr. Theresa Casper-Klock, write "Fr. Joseph" in the memo, and mail to 1712 W. Genesee Street Road, Auburn, NY 13021. Thank you and God bless!

Italy hosted a spectacular celebration of sport, showcasing its hospitality to athletes and visitors from around the world. The Opening and Closing Ceremonies were truly grand, and Italians took great pride in their impressive medal count. *Orgogliosi Italiani!* We also celebrate the dedication of the American athletes, whose perseverance earned 33 medals, including outstanding performances by the USA Hockey teams. Hurrah! We commend our Canadian neighbors for their fine sportsmanship.