



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

Newsletter, September, 2026

Monthly Newsletter

Ciao a tutti! Hello everyone!

Next meeting - Wednesday, September 9, 6:30 pm

Father Nacca Hall, 303 Clark Street, Auburn

Christopher Columbus Day Celebration - October 11, 2026

CIAO's annual Christopher Columbus Testimonial Dinner will once again be held at the Springside Inn in Auburn Sunday, October 11, 2026.

This year, CIAO is pleased to honor Dr. Paul Fallon, D.D.S., as well as longtime CIAO member Bruno Ruscio, who will celebrate his 100th birthday on November 7, 2026. Both gentlemen are most deserving of this special recognition for their many personal achievements and contributions throughout their lives. Included is a letter containing additional information about the event, including reservation details and an opportunity to place a congratulatory message in the program book honoring Dr. Fallon and Bruno. We hope many CIAO members and friends will join us in celebrating these two very special honorees.

CIAO to Be Honored by Tyburn Academy – Tuesday, October 20, 2026

There is an Italian proverb: *“Fai bene e scordati, fai male e pensaci”* — “Do good and put it past you; do ill and regret it.” CIAO's motto is *Caritas e Cultura* — Charity and Culture. Through the years, CIAO has quietly worked to give back, help those in need, and share our Italian culture throughout the community. Many of these good deeds have not gone unnoticed.

On Tuesday, October 20, 2026, CIAO will receive a special tribute from the Board of Tyburn Academy at its annual dinner. The evening brings together members of the community and supporters of Tyburn Academy of Mary Immaculate to recognize an individual or organization for dedication and service to others. This year, the Cultural Italian American Organization has been chosen as the 2026 honoree. It is an immense privilege for CIAO to receive this recognition.

Traditionally, this honor is bestowed upon an individual for his or her dedication and service to the community, how wonderful it is that our entire organization—and, in turn, our entire membership—is being recognized. What a wonderful tribute to all of our members who, through their participation and generosity, have helped CIAO continue its mission of charity, culture, and service. We hope many CIAO members will attend this special dinner as we celebrate an honor that belongs to all of us. *Evviva CIAO!* May we continue on as we have—doing good, helping others, and celebrating our Italian heritage together.

Officers

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Bocce League 2026

Despite a season filled with weather challenges and numerous cancellations, CIAO's 2026 bocce league enjoyed another successful year. Players on our six teams remained flexible and enthusiastic, making the most of every opportunity to gather on the courts. At the conclusion of the season, teams Vaglioni and Holy Cannoli finished tied for first place with the highest point total in the league. Team Vaglioni included John Murtari, Mike Febles, Christine Long, and members of Holy Cannoli were Paul Ricci, Ed Hole, Vince LaFratta, and John Scollan. In the end, the camaraderie, friendly competition, and good spirits that have become a tradition of CIAO bocce made the season a success. CIAO extends their appreciation to the Owasco Town Board and Tammy Flaherty for their kindness for the use of the Bocce courts. Also thank you to Frank DeOrio and John Murtari for coordinating the season. 'Til next year!

Saltarellos in Italia - From Paolo and Anna

There are so many unexpected moments and personal connections that arise throughout our lives, often when we least expect them. Two years ago, we had the pleasure of welcoming Fr. Don Leonardo Catalano to Auburn and introducing him to our CIAO group. Don Leonardo greatly enjoyed his visit, meeting so many people and celebrating an Italian Mass, which was followed by a pasta dinner hosted by CIAO. We had first met Don Leonardo several years earlier, and through our continued visits, a close friendship developed. That friendship has continued to grow, with Don Leonardo even visiting Paolo's *paesani* in Philadelphia.

Don Leonardo is pastor of Maria Santissima Assunta in Biccari and also serves within the Diocese of Lucera-Troia as Curator for Antiquities. Through his work with the Diocese, he learned that one of four priests elevated by Pope Leo XIV to serve as Auxiliary Bishops of Rome had a special connection to our own families and hometowns. One of the newly appointed bishops, His Excellency Alessandro Zenobbi, received the historic titular title connected with Biccari, which had been a diocese centuries ago. But the story became even more meaningful when Don Leonardo contacted us with another piece of news: Bishop Zenobbi's family was originally from Morolo—Anna's hometown. What a coincidence to discover such unexpected connections between Biccari, Morolo, Don Leonardo, and the new bishop.

During our recent visit to Biccari and Morolo, we experienced what felt like a once-in-a-lifetime event. We spent each day of the five-day celebration of San Donato with Bishop Alessandro Zenobbi as he officiated at the many religious ceremonies and festivities. We also had the pleasure of enjoying his personality during dinners and a picnic together. For Anna, one of the most meaningful parts of the visit was reminiscing about her childhood days in Morolo with the bishop, parents, uncle, and aunt. What wonderful memories and connections! And, of course, Paolo could not resist extending an open invitation to the bishop to visit America—and particularly Auburn! *Vediamo!* God's will!

Member News

Condolences – Our sympathy to CIAO member Josephine Salemi Oliveras on the death of her brother Matteo (Matt) recently. Matteo emigrated from Siculiani, Sicily at a very young age with his parents to make a new life in America. Eternal rest – *Eterno riposo* Matteo.

Pizza Fritte News

CIAO's pizza fritte season was still going strong as our dedicated volunteers once again fired up the fryers at the Owasco Farmers Market on Wednesday, August 26. Along with several other food vendors serving their own specialties, CIAO offered its traditional pizza fritte to market visitors. Events such as this help raise funds for our scholarship program and other community contributions. A special thank you to the many volunteers who helped make the event a success: Jay Elice, Donatina Casamassa, Felix Mucedola, Nancy Mancini, Dr. John Ryan, Toni Colella, Ida Slaski, Sue Dwyer, Sue Gatto, the Gucciardi family, Gloria Alano, Annie Febles, Maria A. Lentini, Jo Anne Charles, Paolo and Anna Saltarello, and Mario Saltarello.

As another pizza fritte season comes to a close, CIAO also extends its sincere appreciation to Angelo's Pizza, Kosta's Bar & Grill, Nino's Pizzeria, Mamma Maria NY Pizzeria, and Mark's Pizzeria for their support throughout the season. We are also grateful to the Cayuga County Health Department and Auburn Foundry, and especially to all of our hardworking pizza fritte volunteers whose time and dedication make these events possible.