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

Newsletter, November, 2026

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Monthly Newsletter

Ciao a tutti! Hello everyone!

Next meeting - Wednesday, November 4, 6:30 pm

Father Nacca Hall, 303 Clark Street, Auburn

CIAO Buon Natale – Christmas Celebration

The annual "Buon Natale" get-together for our membership will be held on Saturday, December 5, 2026. Once again, chairing the event will be the mother-and-son team of Carolyn and Jay Elice, who have graciously organized our annual *festa di Natale*. This year's celebration will be held at the Springside Inn, with a cocktail hour (cash bar) beginning at 5 pm and dinner served at 6 pm. The menu will include Virginia Baked Ham, Oven Roasted Turkey, Tuscan Salmon, Pasta Primavera, garlic mashed potatoes, Yankee sausage and sage stuffing, glazed carrots, dessert, coffee, and tea. Tickets are $50 per person. Reservations must be made and payment received by **Monday, November 30. No reservations will be taken after that date**. The venue requires a final count of those attending by that date, and CIAO will be charged for that total. I hope that everyone attending will kindly abide by these formalities, which are standard rules for such events. Dinner costs include an 18–20% gratuity, along with extra charges for the rental and use of the banquet room and bar setup. Reservations can be made by calling Carolyn at 315-246-8327 or emailing Jay at jelice625@gmail.com. The Oak and Vine Room has a limited capacity of 65–70 guests, so please make your reservation at your earliest convenience.

CIAO's Christopher Columbus Dinner

The annual testimonial dinner was well attended, with honors given to the 2026 honorees, Dr. Paul Fallon, DDS, and WWII veteran Bruno Ruscio, who will also celebrate his 100th birthday on November 7, 2026, a milestone in his lifetime. Once again, CIAO excelled in its celebration at the Springside Inn. This year, for everyone's delight, CIAO offered the popular and tasty Neapolitan pastry, *sfogliatella*, for dessert. The Master of Ceremonies, Doug Logan, masterfully conducted the program, making it a fine evening. The arrangements, plans, and presentation for the program book were completed by Paolo and Jay; reservations (a very difficult job!) were handled by Jo Anne Charles, Tony Gucciardi for the Key to the City presentation, Dick Paulino for the plaques presented to the honorees, Anna Saltarello for handling the finances, and Felix Mucedola for his fine live music throughout the evening. Decorations for the festivity of the day were provided by Giuseppe Casamassa, Jay Elice, Paolo, Tony Gucciardi, Jo Anne Charles, and Mario Saltarello.As each year for this occasion, flags from Genova, Roma, and other Italian cities were displayed at the event. These flags were received by Paolo from the individual City Halls he had contacted.

Member News

CIAO Centennial Member - WWII veteran Bruno Ruscio — what a great honor for CIAO to have among our membership someone from the Greatest Generation! As we honored Bruno, CIAO also respectfully honored the other heroes of that admired generation for the courage and fine qualities they demonstrated. *Bravi!* Bruno will celebrate his 100th birthday on November 7, 2026, with a few friends, CIAO members, and family. At CIAO's dinner, Bruno was presented with the Key to the City and a plaque from CIAO. He will now also receive a U.S. flag flown over the Capitol in Washington, DC, courtesy of U.S. Congressman John Mannion. Congressman Mannion's staff member, Jurgen Baeza Bernal, accompanied by Paolo, visited Bruno at his home for a video interview. The interview will be placed in the Library of Congress, a well-deserved recognition and preservation of the history of our veterans. Jerry Pettigrass of Pettigrass Funeral Home has generously provided a case for storing and displaying the flag. We are proud to have Bruno Ruscio in our midst. He has also generously contributed to CIAO's scholarships. *"Pe cent'anni e oltre più!"* — A hundred years and many more!

Congratulazioni – Happy Retirement! After so many years of professional service to those who needed careful assistance with their bones and body parts being placed in their proper positions, Dr. Frank "Ciccio" Vassallo has retired to enjoy a normal daily life. **Paolo's personal note:** I met Frank when he arrived in the USA as a young teenager with his *famiglia*. Frank attended West High School under the administrative guidance of Tony Gucciardi. As we frequently got together, "Ciccio" expressed his intention to study and his determination to become a chiropractor. His goal was to treat misaligned joints and other body parts, helping them return to their proper alignment. *Statte buone*, Dr. Vassallo. Enjoy the time now available to you! *Grazie***!**

State Street Mall Roofline Lights - CIAO Board Member and great furniture maker Matteo Bartolotta, along with his Sicilian *sposa* (wife), the former Rosa Vitale, have brightly illuminated the State Street Mall roofline. On Saturday, October 24, the Bartolotta *famiglia* was on location at AT Walley to light up the mall area with strings of lights that will remain permanently at the top of the buildings. The lights will brighten the area, making it look more festive, like the piazzas in Italia. Another example of the continued *generosità* of Matteo!

Thank yous…*Grazie*, thank you to Steve Bianco's Plumbing for helping us obtain a tubular carrying case for our official ceremonial Italian flag, donated by member Sue Gatto.

Grazie to the contributing members who helped defray the cost of CIAO's guests at the testimonial dinner: Tony Gucciardi, Rocco Lattanzio (Nationwide Insurance), Sue Gatto, and Paolo. At many of our dinners, CIAO respectfully honors its guests with complimentary meals, particularly members of the clergy, as a sign of respect, as we learned from our *nonni*.

Dicevano I Nostri Nonni

From the many sayings of our old *nonni*, we learn about their culture, sacrifices, and hard labor. In their time, education was not always considered essential, nor was it available to everyone. Educational opportunities were limited in many places, and children often had to work to help their families survive. Through their life experiences, our *nonni* passed down many words of wisdom.

"Chi lascia la vecchia via per la nuova, sa quel che lascia, ma non sa quel che trova."
The one who leaves the old road (or place) knows what he or she is leaving behind
but does not know what the new road (or place) will bring.
"La casa e la famiglia sono una ricchezza della vita."
Home and family are among the greatest treasures (riches) of a lifetime.
"Dimmi con chi vai e ti dirò chi sei."
Tell me with whom you associate, and I will tell you who you are.