

# ORDER SONS OF ITALY IN AMERICA

## CHAPTER NEWS – SUMMER 2003

### ARIZONA

**Pulling Rank** • The toughest sheriff in America was honored in May by the **Grand Lodge of Arizona**. Maricopa County **Sheriff Joseph Arpaio**, who heads the country's fourth largest sheriff's department, is known as a tough but creative law enforcer.

His innovative programs include the only accredited high school in a U.S. jail, extensive use of chain gangs which provide thousands of dollars of free labor and the policy that jail is not a country club – he has banned smoking, coffee and unrestricted television in jail cells.

### NEW YORK

**Book Smarts** • Promoting Italian American literature was on the agenda for both the **Duca Degli Abruzzi Lodge #443** and **Daughters of Columbus Lodge #1666**, both in Endicott.

In May, the lodges co-hosted a "Celebration dei Libri," an Italian American book festival, that included book readings and signings by local and regional authors as well as craft activities for children, according to lodge presidents **Stephen Rogers** and **Barbara Petrilli**.

### PENNSYLVANIA

**OSIA...and ASAP!** • Philadelphia area Sons of Italy members and the city's "After School Activities Partnership" (ASAP) joined forces to make after-school Italian courses a reality in Philadelphia this summer. With the Sons of Italy's support, ASAP's activities now go beyond yoga, chess and knitting to include Italian as its first foreign language offering.

ASAP applied for funding through the Italian Language Preservation Foundation, whose president, **Anna Forte**, is also the president and co-founder, with her husband Edward, of the **Sons of Italy Benvenuto Lodge**. The pilot program has 20 students and uses distance-learning Italian language videos that Forte developed.

ASAP representative **Francis Tamburino**, also a Sons of Italy member, says the unique OSIA/ASAP partnership could help expand Italian courses in local private, public and parochial schools.

Anna Forte also reports that due to Sons of Italy support, Radnor High School in Radnor will offer Italian in September. To learn more or volunteer for the after-school pilot program, contact ASAP at [www.phillyasap.org](http://www.phillyasap.org) or call 215/772-7364.

## RHODE ISLAND

**Providential Mayor** • In January, **David N. Cicilline** became the 36<sup>th</sup> mayor of Providence. An attorney and former state legislator, Cicilline is also a member of **Piave Lodge #264** and the first Jewish-Italian mayor in the city's history.

## VIRGINIA

**For the Orphans** • As a college student back in the 1960s, at-large member **Christina Foster Meloni** volunteered one summer at Casa Materna, an orphanage near Naples. The experience so moved her that she returned to the orphanage many times over the years and often met the now-grown children who shared their stories with her. Now she has captured these experiences in the book "Powdered Peas and Other Blessings: Life in an Orphanage in Naples, Italy." Softcover. \$14.95. Proceeds will benefit the orphanage.

To order, contact Xlibris Publishers ([orders@Xlibris.com](mailto:orders@Xlibris.com)), or call 888/795-4274 x276. Meloni is at 703/922-7142 or [meloni@gwu.edu](mailto:meloni@gwu.edu).

## WEST VIRGINIA

**Spreading the Word** • Impressed with the news that the Sons of Italy Foundation gave away \$100,000 in scholarships at its recent gala in Washington, **State President Nick Ameli** picked up the phone and called his local newspaper editor, who asked for more information.

Nick sent him the SIF news release he got from OSIA National along with information about the \$40,000 in scholarships his own lodge, the **Fratelli Trecolori #2631** in Bluefield/Princeton has given away to date.

Not stopping there, Nick sent the SIF news release to West Virginia's other five lodges and all the people on his state newsletter's mailing list, urging them to reach out to their local press.

In June, for the third consecutive year, Nick's lodge presented \$10,000 in scholarships to Italian American students. "We fund the awards with money raised at our annual Southern West Virginia Italian American festival every October," Nick says.

The festival also attracts new members and his lodge recruits the parents of each year's scholarship winners. Now he hopes by spreading the word in local newspapers even more people in his state will join OSIA.

"Always take the opportunity to promote your local lodge," Nick tells his presidents. "It makes for good public relations. Sometimes people only hear about our fund raising activities and not the good work we do with the money we collect." Contact Nick Ameli at 304/589-3317.

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