



Notes From The PRESIDENT

Celebrating 100 years!

Daniel Galli, President

As this historic year for Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan comes to a close, this special edition of the Grapevine serves as our "Commemorative Edition". Over the many years this organization has been in existence, all that we do centers around one common theme and that is the pride we have for our Italian heritage. Aside from the 100 Year Gala celebration, all of the events highlighted in this edition are just business as usual for this organization.

Our fundraising events help us to support and be active in the community. Whether it is our participation in the annual three day Festa Italiana or the events surrounding Columbus Day, the IACCM is there to volunteer, participate or just celebrate! The money we raise in our Annual Golf Outing supports our Scholarship program and our Festa Della Lira (a reverse raffle) helps many local charities that are close to the IACCM.

This edition also gives us another opportunity to thank and honor all those who sponsored this year's 100 Year Gala celebration. It was certainly one for the ages! We would not have been able to give this historic milestone its just recognition without the generosity of our sponsors, and for that we are extremely grateful.

This celebration would also not be possible without a membership that is an engaging group of Italian Americans that stretches from 1919 to present day. I am blessed and proud to be a member of this organization and I am honored and humbled to be the president.



DON'T MISS CENT'ANNI!

Cent'Anni, a film directed and produced by IACCM members Anthony Bommarito and Michael Peraino's Killer Productions, will be shown on WXYZ TV on Sunday, December 22 at 10:30 AM. It tells the story of the IACCM, past, present, and future.





Proud To Make History

Angela Marie Pippi-Soave

100 Years. Wow! What an accomplishment for our Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan! Reflecting on the Chamber's progress over the years and its contribution to our community, I am so very proud to have made history as the first female Board Member/Officer to serve in the Chamber. Just think, when the Chamber started 100 years ago, its membership consisted exclusively of businessmen. Now, the Chamber boasts a membership inclusive of women, as well as younger associate members. As a woman in the Italian community, I often find myself caught between two worlds – the world of old where women maintained traditional roles and the world of today where women have the freedom to realize any dream and achieve any goal that they can envision. I was raised with a sense of pride for my Italian heritage, and I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to achieve higher education and to participate in a diversified workforce. Over ten years ago, I was welcomed with open arms by the Chamber. I am honored to have the opportunity to bring a female perspective to the Chamber and its Board of Directors to assist in serving our Italian community. As a Chamber, we realize the importance of continual growth and changing with the times. I am proud to have opened the door for Italian women to succeed in and be respected members of our Chamber. I look forward to growing our female membership so that they too can experience the wonderful sense of pride that I have experienced in helping to accomplish the Chamber's mission of "nurturing an environment of business and professional growth, inclusive of our Italian history and culture". We've come so far already; just imagine what the next 100 years will bring! Onward and upward!





Festa Della Lira

Dr. Anthony Giordano and Dr. Charles Shermetaro

The annual Festa Della Lira has been one of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce's main fundraising events going back to the 1990's. The Festa Della Lira is a \$10,000 reverse raffle fundraiser, the proceeds of which are used to supplement Chamber operations and various donations. The reverse raffle event features a grand prize of \$10,000 plus over \$3,000 in additional cash prizes. Another highlight of the evening is the Basket of Cheer Raffle which has provided thousands of dollars to local charities. Some of the charities that have benefitted from the Festa Della Lira over the years include: Leader Dogs for the Blind, Toys for Tots, Friends of Foster Kids and I-Care of Michigan. Other activities that take place during the festive evening are a 50/50 raffle and a 180th ticket raffle, which puts the winner in the final ten tickets drawn for the \$10,000 grand prize.

This event all takes place in conjunction with the May general membership meeting, complete with a fabulous dinner and open bar. This event sells out annually and is made possible by the many chamber members who provide their time, help and support in preparation for and throughout the evening. So we thank all who have joined us over the past years--too many to name--in putting this Festa Della Lira together!



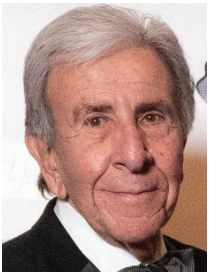


IACCM Scholarship Program

Honorable Joseph Toia

The IACCM Scholarship program was created in the 1980's to inspire our youth to reflect on their Italian heritage, and recognize the importance the values they learned 'growing up Italian' would have on their future. Scholarships are scored by a panel of community leaders (not associated with the IACCM) based on academic achievement, community service and an essay on what their Italian heritage means to them. Scholarship awards range from \$500 to \$1,500 and are funded with the net proceeds from the IACCM-John Agosta Memorial golf outing. Over the years the IACCM scholarship program has awarded over \$300,000 in scholarships to hundreds of future business, professionals and community leaders of Italian descent. On behalf of the IACCM Scholarship Committee, "Thank you for preserving our Italian Heritage".





John B. Agosta Memorial Golf Outing

Andy Agosta

Year 2020 will mark the 37th anniversary of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan John B. Agosta Memorial Golf Outing. Fred Severini, Jr. and John Agosta started this fundraising event to fund the Chamber's scholarship program from which many young Italian-American students benefit. Over the years, more than \$300,000 has been gifted to students of Italian heritage under the guidelines of the scholarship committee. The golf outing includes a delicious lunch, snacks and dinner. Each year, the golf outing committee chooses a deserving Chamber member to be honored at that year's golf outing. The chosen member receives accolades and special plaque presentation at the dinner immediately following the eighteen holes of golf.

If you have not attended this event, please make a point to join us for a day of good friends, good food and good conversation. Even if you don't golf, join us for a fabulous dinner. Prizes are also given, among other things, for rare hole in one shots and the longest drive. Photos of the fun had during past years' golf outings can be viewed on our website at www.iaccm.net. Remember to save the date for June 29, 2020 for next year's golf outing! There are also a variety of levels of sponsorship support and we welcome any contribution.





Festa Italiana

Aaron Francolini Marentette

Festa Italiana is one of the most important and well-loved Italian American traditions in metro Detroit. It is an annual 3-day festival, which hosts in excess of 40,000 guests each year. Festa Italiana was organized in about 1970 by the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan. The festival's first Chairman was Ross Amicucci; however Ross sadly passed away in 1973 and the reigns were handed over to the long time Festa Chairman Martin "Reno" Garagiola. Originally the event was hosted along Atwater Street in downtown Detroit but Reno moved the festival to Hart Plaza on the waterfront in 1975. In the early 1990s Reno moved the Festa



to Freedom Hill County Park in Sterling Heights where it has been held almost every year since. For a few years the Festa had to be relocated to Macomb Community College and downtown Mount Clemens, as Freedom Hill was shut down temporarily. Reno Garagiola served as the Chairman of the Festa from 1973 until he passed away in 2007. At that point the torch was passed to the Festa's current Chairman Joseph P. Ventimiglia. Although Reno passed away in 2007 his legacy lives on every July as metro Detroit Italians



gather to celebrate and enjoy amazing Italian food, wine, entertainment and most importantly, the company of their fellow Italians in the community.

In 2004 the Festa Italiana was in danger of becoming extinct. However, several local Italian Americans refused to let it become a thing of the past. Reno Garagiola and Joe Ventimiglia with the help of Nino Salvaggio, The Randazzo Family, Joe Vicari of Andiamo, The Picano Family, Frank Mastro, and Tom Bommarito, amongst others, got to work to ensure the Festa would go on. The Festa has long been anchored by several local Italian owned businesses and restaurants. Nino Salvaggio International Marketplace, which hosts the largest tent at the Festa serves some Italian staples including Sicilian steak sandwiches with amoghiu sauce, Italian sausage, gelato, and many other desserts and treats. Randazzo Fresh Market serves up wood fired pizza, grilled shrimp, lamb chops and delicious ripe fruit. Andiamo serves delicious crowd favorites such as mostaccioli, arancini, calamari, and more recently cannoli and other sweet treats from their Vito's Bakery tent. Picano's



Italian Grill, has served some new and old world favorites, like pasta and trippa among other things. Frank Mastro with Strohs has been scooping up and serving delicious ice cream for everyone to enjoy. Festa Italiana also hosts several other local food vendors each year including Gnocchi Italian Restaurant, Vince and Joe's Gourmet Market, and a range of other rotating vendors like Red Smoke BBQ, Great Lakes Food Truck, and National Coney Island, who serves everything from funnel cake to French fries.



In addition to the food vendors the Festa also hosts upwards of 50 craft vendors annually, which sell a range of products for all to enjoy. Each year the Festa hosts not only local but also national talent on the famous Lucido Family Stage. The Festa has hosted the Scintas, Ray Massa's EuroRhythms, Aaron Caruso, Mark Randisi, the Bellini Opera, American Idol contestant Justin Guarini, The Voice contestants Sal Valentinetti and Austin Giorgio, Simone Vitale, Jeff Cavataio, young Anna Hillard, Eva Evola, Noelle Borgia, The Italian Souvenirs, and many others. In addition to the great food and entertainment, the Festa also hosts such attractions as an inflatable fun zone for kids, and a petting zoo. Most recently the Festa has also hosted a spectacular Firework show for its guests on the opening night that is so good, it shuts down traffic. In 2019 the Festa organizers were also able to host flag throwers all the way from Italy- Sbandieratori Ducato Caetani Citta di Sermonata. At the Festa guests can also enjoy some other traditions such as the annual cannoli eating contest, the meatball contest, the beautiful baby contest, a singing contest and a Sunday Mass.



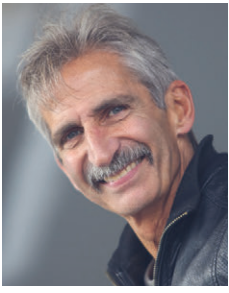
Although the Italian American Chamber of Commerce was responsible for establishing the Festa, it was hosted for several years by the Italian American Cultural Society due largely in part to the fact that Reno, Joe and many other members were heavily involved in both organizations. In 2018 Joe Ventimiglia named Aaron Marentette another IACCM member as his Festa Italiana Co-Chairman. In 2019 the IACCM again assumed the role of the Festa Italiana's presenting organization, a special year in which they were also celebrating their 100th year of existence. Many of the IACCM members have stepped up to ensure the Festa continues to be a successful event for years to come.



The Festa would not be possible if it were not for all of wonderful sponsors who have helped keep the Festa alive and growing over the years, including the Lucido Family, Alfa Romeo of Lakeside, Fern Hill Golf Club, Andiamo, Nino Salvaggio International Marketplace, Randazzo Fresh Market, Bagnasco & Calcaterra Funeral Homes, Dr. Anthony

Giordano with Shelby Foot and Ankle, MJC Builders, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Caliber Home Loans, LaLonde Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep-Ram Dealership, T-Mobile, Wujek-Calcaterra Funeral Home, Giuseppe's International Oils and Vinegars, and Summit Plastic Molding.





Columbus Day Celebration

Mark Garagiola

The Columbus Day Celebration Committee has just completed a series of yearly events to acknowledge the accomplishments of the great Italian navigator Christopher Columbus, along with paying homage to the contributions of local Italian Americans.

The first event was the Columbus Day Queen Pageant held in June, in which nine beautiful girls of Italian descent competed in three age categories to be Columbus Day Queen, Little Miss Columbus, and Young Queen Isabella. The young lady chosen as the 2019 Columbus Day Queen, Gina DiGirolamo, was awarded a \$1000 scholarship by the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan to be put toward her college education.

October's events began with Mass at San Francesco Church on October 6, attended by members of the Columbus Day Committee, queens, and honorees. After Mass there was a procession outside in honor of San Francesco, patron saint of the church, followed by a coffee, snacks, and fellowship.



The third event was the Ramo Salerno Trip to Lansing on October 8, which is an annual event, sponsored and partially funded by fellow IACCM member Cavaliere Ramo Salerno.

At this event over one hundred Italian Americans took three motor coaches up to Lansing to participate with IACCM member State Senator Peter J. Lucido and State Representative Steve Marino in presenting proclamations to the 2019 honorees, the 2019 Ramo Salerno honorees, the queens and courts of both the 2019 Columbus Day Celebration Committee and the Italian American Club of Livonia, and Italian Consul in Detroit Dr. Maria

Manca. The award ceremony was followed by lunch in the Mackinac Room with entertainment by Dino Valle.

The fourth event was the annual Columbus Day parade held in downtown Mt. Clemens on October 10. The parade was led by Grand Marshall Elio Ripari and featured the Macomb County Mounted Division, the Michigan Ramblers, local Italian owned businesses, and Italian clubs and organizations including the Italian American Chamber of Commerce, with members Dan Galli, Angela Pippi Soave, Dave Galli, Sandra Tornberg, and Ron DiBartolomeo proudly holding the IACCM 100 Year Anniversary banner. An awards ceremony was held at Fern Hill Golf and Country Club after the parade, which featured the "Holy Cannoli Eating Contest", which was sponsored by Sonny Randazzo of Randazzo Fresh Markets.

On Sunday, October 13, over 150 members of the Italian American community traveled to downtown Detroit to celebrate a Columbus Day Mass with Father Daniele Criscione (PIME) at the historic Holy Family Church. The Knights of Columbus had four members in attendance to add to the pageantry of the event. After the Mass a group of thirty convened at the bust of Christopher Columbus at Jefferson and Randolph for a wreath ceremony and short retrospective presentation by Pam Baker White from The Italian Tribune, whose ancestors provided the financial backing for the creation of the Columbus bust.



The series of Columbus events culminated that evening in an honors banquet held at the Italian American Cultural Society and Banquet Center in Clinton Township. Over 225 friends and family gathered for the banquet and awards presentation to the 2019 Columbus Day "Man of the Year" IACCM Board Member Mark Garagiola, 2019 "Woman of the Year" Clarice Squillace, and 2019 "Humanitarians of the Year" Angela and Luigi LaMarra. Each of the honorees received a 24-inch tall stainless steel ship inspired by the Nina and Santa Maria from Christopher Columbus' fleet. The ships were created by New Mexico metal sculptor Stephen Marasco, who has roots in metro Detroit.



Sandra Tornberg

Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan Celebrates 100th Anniversary

On October 19, 2019, the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan (IACCM) commemorated its 100th anniversary with a gala celebration at the Detroit Athletic Club.

The IACCM was founded in 1919 by the Consul of Italy in Detroit Pietro Cardellio, as well as several Detroit area Italian Americans, to promote business relationships between Italy and the United States. Among the early founding fathers were attorneys Joseph Schippacasse, Anthony Esperti and Dr. Vincent Mancuso, as well as local businessmen Andrew Maglia, Mark Valente Sr., Frank Loverde and Raymond Cuomo. Today, the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan is an active and vibrant group of approximately 170 Italian Americans who are proud of their Italian heritage and are engaged in many worthwhile charitable and business activities contributing to the entrepreneurial spirit, goodwill and success of the Southeastern Michigan community.



IACCM President Daniel Galli and event chairman Ron DiBartolomeo welcomed the 306 guests and thanked the sponsors who helped make the evening possible. The presenting and elite sponsors for the event were DTE and Andiamo. Consul of Italy in Detroit Dr. Maria Manca congratulated the IACCM for reaching this important milestone and their commitment to the community. The State of Michigan issued a special tribute in honor of the 100th anniversary celebration, signed by State Representative of the 33rd District Jeff Yarocho, State Senator Peter J. Lucido of the 8th District, Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist II, and Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

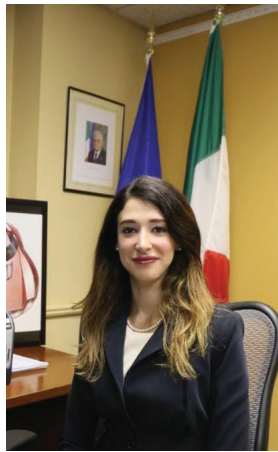
The highlight of the evening was the premiere of a film directed by Anthony Bommarito and produced by Michael Peraino of Killer Productions. The film features historical film clips from the IACCM archives and comments by longtime and newer members regarding the history, relevance, and future of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan. Each guest received a beautifully packaged copy of the film as a remembrance of the occasion.

Master of Ceremonies for the evening was singer Aaron Caruso, whose vocal students performed the Italian and American national anthems. The Verdi Brass Quintet, directed by Bradley Arnold, performed the "Triumphal March" from Aida and "Va Pensiero" from Nabucco. David Passalacqua and Francesco Cavallini entertained during the cocktail hour and the Simon Vitale Band provided music for dancing after dinner.

It was a fitting celebration for the first one hundred years of this great organization, with the anticipation of continued success into its next century.



Consolato d'Italia
Detroit



It gives me great pleasure to extend to all the members of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan my heartfelt congratulations on the 100th anniversary of the association.

This is an important milestone for your association which has assisted fellow immigrants and members of the Italian and Italian-American community in the pursuit of their careers and businesses. The dedication and perseverance demonstrated by all the members over these 100 years are a source of pride for you as well as for your Country of Origin.

It is my profound hope that the commitment established may continue in the common goal of promoting and preserving the cherished ties to your Country of Origin.

With my sincere congratulations to all the membership of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan on this auspicious occasion, I extend my very best regards.

Detroit, September 10, 2019

Maria Manca
Consul of Italy



IN MEMORIAM

Anthony "Tony" Palazzola,

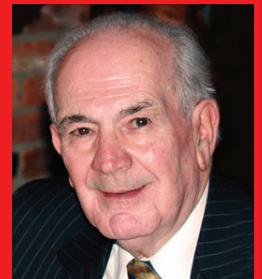


long time IACCM member and owner of Wit-O-Matic and Clarkston Carbide Tool, passed away on December 20, 2018 at the age of 84. Tony was a friend to many members and a

true gentleman. He will be sadly missed. Please keep his family in your prayers!

Frank Anthony Pompa passed away January 9, 2019 at the age of 91. Beloved husband of Lina.

Mr. Pompa served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps following World War II. He worked his entire career at Chrysler Corporation retiring in 1988. He served the Italian American Chamber of Commerce as a Board of Director from 1972-1973, Treasurer from 1974-1977, 2nd VP in 1978 to finally become President in 1979 and 1980.



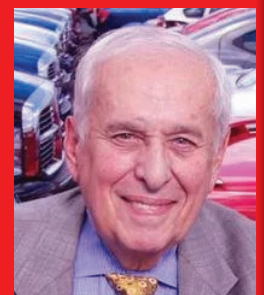
Floyd Beaudette passed away at the age of 88 on January 19, 2019.

Floyd was a proud US Navy Veteran and lifelong member of the Walter F. Bruce VFW Post #1146. He was

also a long time member of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce, the St. Michael Knights of Columbus, & the Italian American Cultural Society.

Anthony Viviano

passed away October 29, 2019 after a long illness. He was the owner of Sterling Heights Dodge and a big supporter of the IACCM since joining in 1989. He will be sadly missed.



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2000 Benedetto Marrocco
1999 Augustino Russo
1994 Angelo Lanni
1991 Thomas B. Lanni
1979 Frank Pompa
1978 Mark Valente, Jr.
1974 Joseph Grimaudo

Mission Statement

The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan

"To nurture an environment for business and professional growth inclusive of our Italian history and culture, that provides our members the commercial, educational, and charitable forums necessary to inspire pride throughout the Italian community, and to establish a relationship of trust and service between our members and our fellow citizens."



LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP:

REGULAR \$400/YEAR
ASSOCIATE \$175/YEAR
CORPORATE \$500/YEAR

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IACCM.NET FOR DETAILS