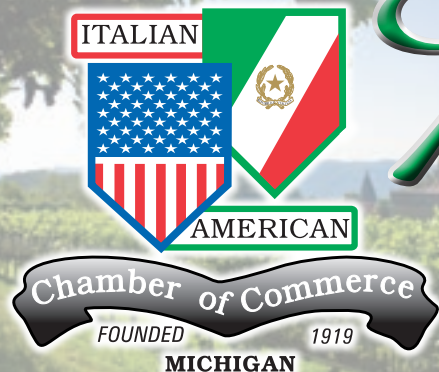




The Grapevine

A Publication From
The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan
Fall/Winter Issue • 2026
Volume 25 • Number 3
Visit Our Website at: www.iaccm.net



Upcoming EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

TIME

- 6:00 PM Board Meeting
- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION

- Century Banquet Center
33204 Maple Lane, Sterling Heights

OCTOBER 7, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

TIME

- 6:00 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION

- Italian American Cultural Center
43843 Romeo Plan Road, Clinton Township

FESTA DELLA LIRA

NOVEMBER 1, 2026 • SUNDAY

Holy Family/IACCM All Souls Memorial Mass

TIME • 9:30 AM Mass, pancake breakfast to follow

LOCATION

- Holy Family Church 941 Chrysler Drive, Detroit

NOVEMBER 4, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

Nomination of 2027 Officers/Board of Directors

TIME

- 6:00 PM Board Meeting
- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION • Petruzzello's Banquet Center

6950 Rochester Road, Troy



DECEMBER 2, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

2027 Election Results

TIME

- 6:00 PM Board Meeting
- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION • Villa Penna

43985 Hayes Road, Sterling Heights



Notes from the PRESIDENT

Welcome back members of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce! I hope all of you enjoyed another beautiful Michigan summer. Our group had quite an eventful season.

Summer started off with our scholarship night on June 3rd at the Venetian Club. So many promising young students received monetary help for their ongoing education.

With the exceptional success of this year's John B. Agosta golf outing, next year will be our biggest scholarship awards night ever. Thank you to the golf committee headed by Ron DiBartolomeo and Anthony Agosta for all their hard work!

Things kept rolling with the Festa Italiana at Freedom Hill. The Chamber runs the beverage tents and a 50/50 raffle, both of which were an enormous success this year. The raffle prize winner walked away with \$10,000! Huge thanks to Joe Ventimiglia, and Aaron Marentette for running point on this event, year after year. Also, a big shout out to Ron DiBartolomeo again for emceeing on the big stage and keeping the entertainment on track. Thanks again to Joe Vicari and the Andiamo team for allowing us to be a part of such an impressive event!

The 13th annual Concourse D'Agostini was held July 31st at Villa Penna to raise money for local charities. So many beautiful cars were there! Thank you to everyone who supported this event.

Now that Fall is here, our monthly meetings will start off September 2nd at Century Banquet Center, (a member favorite), followed by the Festa Della Lira, (our reverse raffle), at the Italian Cultural Center. We will be expanding this to 200 tickets from the previous 180 tickets, to allow more members to take part.

If you have friends or business associates who are interested in checking out the IACCM, bring them to a meeting so they can enjoy a great meal and meet many interesting people. Be sure to email Debbie if you have a guest so she can have a proper headcount for the hall. The guest fee is \$50 and can be paid at the door. As I always

Notes From The President

Continued from page 1

say, move around the room and engage with other members. You may make a connection that could lead to an opportunity worth pursuing, or a lasting friendship. Remember we all have one thing in common...a love for Italian culture.

Fall is meant for football, so we are also planning another tailgate party for a Detroit Lions game at Art and Jakes. Details to come soon. Brush up on your Godfather Trivia, because I will be continuing to give members an opportunity to win 50/50 raffle tickets at each monthly meeting.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you soon, and as always, feel free to contact me at 586-306-0126 if you have any questions or input on the IACCM.

Ciao,
Joe DiVozzo, President



Chairman's CORNER

Hello members!

What a fantastic Michigan summer it has been—even if it always seems to pass too quickly. The IACCM kicked off the season with Scholarship Night on June 3, awarding more than \$17,000 to deserving young men and women.

Our John B. Agosta Memorial Golf Outing was held June 29 at Fern Hill Golf Club. We enjoyed perfect weather and raised a record amount to award next June. Thank you to the golf committee, led by Ron DiBartolomeo and Anthony Agosta!

July brought another successful Festa Italiana to Freedom Hill, with record-setting attendance. Thank you to Joe Ventimiglia and Aaron Marentette for all their hard work. The 50/50 winner took home \$10,000, and we appreciate Philip Maniaci and Dan Galli for managing ticket sales. Thank you also to Joe Vicari for once again sharing this event with us.

We are excited to begin our fall season at the Century Banquet Center on September 2. Guests are encouraged and welcome, and the guest fee is \$50. Please let Debbie know in advance so she can plan accordingly.

Festa Della Lira will be held October 7 at the Italian American Cultural Center. This year, we are expanding the reverse raffle from 180 to 200 tickets. Our Chamber is growing, so be sure to get your tickets soon. This event is always an exciting time.

We are also planning another Lions tailgate at Art & Jakes this year, with details coming soon. Go Lions! I look forward to seeing everyone again soon.

Sincerely,
Mike Divozzo, Chairman of the Board

IN MEMORIAM

Agostino "Gus" Russo

Gus passed away at the age of 87 on July 5th surrounded by his family. Gus joined the Chamber in 1985 and rose from being a Board of Director all the way to President in 1999, he was a long-time co-chair of the IACCM golf outing. He was a good friend to so many members. His generosity was unmatched.

Those who knew him could hear him clear as day saying, "give me a \$20!" as he never let anyone NOT buy a 50/50 ticket at the outing. (if you know.. you know)



Rest in peace Gus, you will be missed.



Columbus Day
Celebration Committee

ITALIAN HERITAGE STREET FAIR

DOWNTOWN MT CLEMENS - MACOMB PLACE - NEXT TO ANTON ART CENTER

Join us for Italian food, music, fun, clowns, and supporting local businesses while enjoying the downtown atmosphere of Mt Clemens!

HIGHLIGHTS:

- FOOD VENDORS
- LOCAL CRAFTERS
- FAMILY FUN



OCT 3 2026

12-9PM

MORE INFORMATION CAN BE SEEN AT

COLUMBUSDAYMI.COM

810-338-1903



Italian-American Chamber of Commerce Birthdays for:



September

9/4 D'Anna, Philip
9/6 Szymanski, Joe
9/6 Ventimiglia, Joseph P.
9/8 Lucido, Joseph
9/10 Cavaliere, Raymond
9/11 Piccirilli, Umberto
9/14 Agosta, Andrew
9/15 Wilson, Rebecca L.
9/18 Crudo, Samuel
9/21 Lazzara, David A.
9/22 Pianello, Vito
9/22 Manzella, Matthew K.
9/24 DeFlaviis, Alfred
9/25 Mercurio, Jr., Frank A
9/26 Badalamente, Paula
9/28 Promesso, Charles

9/28 Ventimiglia Stranding, Jaclyn
9/29 Terzo, Thomas
9/29 Toarmino, Edward

October

10/3 Licata, III, Anthony C.
10/3 Palazzolo, Jerry
10/3 Lavinio-Mattinen, Tina
10/10 Sgroi, Jodi
10/11 D'Agostini, Antonio
10/11 Milkey III, James A.
10/12 Meli, Paul
10/27 Divozzo, Michael

November

11/2 DiBartolomeo, Ronald A.
11/4 Coppola, Michele
11/11 Marino, Al
11/13 Galli, Carlina

11/15 Koss, Ralph
11/16 Badalamente, Brianne
11/17 Beran, David
11/17 Milkey, James A.
11/18 Galli, Daniel A.
11/20 Palermino, Leonard
11/21 Moran, Charles
11/24 Angelo, Maryrose
11/25 Calcaterra, Lawrence
11/25 Terzo, Leo
11/27 Fromm, Brandon C.
11/28 Pugno, John

December

12/1 Cervone, Matthew D.
12/2 Bonanni, Joseph
12/3 Torres, Dominic G.
12/7 Cuccia, Salvatore

12/10 Cole, Steve
12/13 DiCicco, Lucia
12/14 Nehra, Samuel
12/17 Bonadeo, David C.
12/20 Nehra, Gregory
12/27 Tenaglia, Michel
12/28 Pascarella, Joseph A.

January

1/1 Maniaci, Philip J.
1/2 Yearego, James L.
1/4 Marrocco, Peter
1/11 Bommarito, Anthony
1/14 Coppola, Frank
1/20 Cardella, Michael
1/22 Bommarito, Thomas
1/25 Evangelista, Mario
1/26 Palomba, Anthony J.
1/28 Torrice, Dr. Peter
1/28 Schmelzer, Andria

Beautiful Baby Contest Held at Festa Italiana



Contest coordinator Pan Vanderziel



Front row l to r:

Cecelia Cantrall and mom Stephanie, Aria McMahon and mom Brooke Brancato, Carson Towns, Ariana Andrighetti, Ava Marie Bahr

Back row l to r:

Demi Lucci and mom Roula Lucci, Sponsor Dr. Anthony Giordano, Carissa Towns, Sabrina Andrighetti, Lauren Bahr

The Festa Italiana Beautiful Baby Contest was inundated with bellissimi bambini. This year's winners are:
(9-18 months) **ARIA MCMAHON** ~ Parents: Brooke Brancato & Jesse McMahon (19-23 moths) **ARIANA ANDRIGHETTI** ~ Parents: Daniel & Sabrina Andrighetti (2 yrs old) **CECELIA CANTRALL** Parents: Michael & Stephaine Cantrall (3 Years old) **CARSON TOWNS** Parents: Carrisa & Brian Towns (4 years old) **AVA MARIE BAHR** Parents: Stephen & Lauren Bahr (5 years old) **DEMI LUCCI** Parents: Danny & Roula Lucci

Meatball Winners 2026

The Frank J. Palazzolo Memorial “ Judges Judging Meatball” Contest Winners

The “Frank J. Palazzolo Judges Judging Meatballs Contest” was another tasty event this year. The winners were first-time contestant Vincent Recchia in the individual category and Cloverleaf Bar and Restaurant, represented by Marie Guerra Easterly, in the restaurant category. This was the sixth consecutive win for Cloverleaf. Our judges were Macomb County Circuit Court Judges Hon. Anthony Servitto, Hon. Richard Caretti, Chief Judge Hon. James Biernat, Hon. Tanya Grillo, Hon. Julie Gatti, and Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Hon. Laura Polizzi, assisted by her son Marcello. Bryan Rutherford filled in for his father-in-law Macomb County Circuit Court Judge Hon. Joseph Toia. Thank you to all our judges and contestants.



Michael Palazzolo,
Frank Palazzolo,
Sam Palazzolo,
Victoria Palazzolo

Sponsor
Paul Calcaterra,
Marie Guerra Easterly
from Cloverleaf Bar
and Restaurant



Macomb County Circuit Court Judge
Hon. Anthony Servitto, Hon. Richard Caretti,
Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Hon.
Laura Polizzi, Marcello Polizzi,
Chief Judge Hon. James Biernat,
Bryan Redford, Hon. Tanya Grillo,
Hon. Julie Gatti, Sponsor Paul Calcaterra



Sponsor
Paul Calcaterra,
Vincent Recchia



Cannoli Contest Winner

The Festa Italiana Cannoli Contest was an exciting one, with 7-time champion Matt Gino coming out of retirement to defend his title against 2-time runner up Shy Khan. Both had fabulous cheering sections. Shy was the winner, consuming 17 cannoli in 5 minutes.



L to R CJ Watts, Matt Gino, Shy Khan

Matt Gino



Aaron
Marantette
presents award
to Shy Khan



L to R Sierra Keffer,
Gaetano Melaragni



Italian American Idol

2026 Festa Italiana Italian American Idol Singing Contest Winners

The Italian American Idol Contest brought out 9 talented singers from ages 10 to 77. This year's winners were Vivien Maria Sacco in the 9-to-12-year category, and Carson Colby in the 13-to-17-year category. They each received a \$100 gift card and a plaque. Isaac Murray and Cecilia Colasante Valente shared the \$500 prize in the 18 and over category. Thank you to our distinguished judges Arthur White, Detroit Opera Director of Community and Audience Engagement, Richard Fracker, Professor of Voice and Chair of Vocal Arts at Michigan State University, and Choral Director and organist David Troiano.



Vivien
Maria
Sacco
←



→
Cecilia
Colasante
Valente



Carson
Colby
←



→
Isaac
Murray



Festa Italiana • July 17-19, 2026 • Freedom Hill County











Festa Italiana 2026



Festa Italiana
2026



Festa Italiana
2026

Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan Awards 2026 Academic Scholarships

The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan (IACCM) proudly announced the results of its 2026 scholarship competition at its monthly meeting on June 3rd at Club Venetian.

The Honorable Joseph Toia, Macomb County Circuit Court, has been chairman of the IACCM Scholarship Committee for twenty-six years and once again presided over the awards presentations. This year \$17,500 in scholarships were awarded to twelve talented young people. Over the past forty years, the IACCM has awarded over \$600,000 in scholarships.

This year's recipients were:

Vito Palazzolo (awarded the Lido Bucci \$2500 scholarship, Anthony Di Reese, Olivia Cereska, Luca Polidori, Evan Wyatt, Abigayle Rossow, Olivia Cervone, Abigail Cunningham, Alessia Morreale, Adrianna Lucido, and Catherine Gaetano.

The main source of funding for the scholarships is an annual golf outing that is well attended and supported by the IACCM membership who recognize and value the importance of honoring and rewarding deserving young Italian Americans for their achievements.

Scholarship awards are presented to outstanding students with excellent academic achievements as well as community and athletic accomplishments. To be eligible to apply and compete for a scholarship, applicants must meet all the following criteria:

- A) Applicant must be of Italian ancestry.
- B) Applicant must be a graduating high school senior or full-time undergraduate student attending an accredited college or university and working toward a two- or four-year degree.
- C) Applicant must be domiciled in the state of Michigan.
- D) Applicant must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Congratulations to all the winners and their families.



Chairman Mike Divozzo, Luca Polidorio, Anthony Direzze, Adrianna Lucido, Abigail Cunningham, Olivia Cereska, Olivia Cervone, Alessia Morreale, Vito Palazzolo, Evan Wyatt, Abigayle Rossow, President Joe Divozzo . Not pictured Catherine Gaetano.

June 3, 2026 • Scholarship Dinner • Club Venetian

Scholarship Chairman Joseph Toia and Co-Chair Sandra Tornberg
with our scholarship award recipients.



Adrianna Lucido



Alessia Morreale



Abigail Cunningham



Alessia Morreale



Abigail Rossow



Anthony Direzze



Evan Wyatt



Luca Polidori



Vito Palazzolo, Lido Bucci Award recipient



Olivia Cereska



Greg Gagnon, Ron DiBartolomeo, Dave Lazzara, Vito Pianello,
Dave Galli, and Mike Locricchio



Julie Divozzo, Mike Divozzo and Stefano Garrisi



←
Past Presidents
Charles
Shermetaro, OD,
and Charles Moran

→
Theresa Toia and
Joe Lucido



June 29th John B. Agosta Memorial Golf Outing – Fern Hill Golf Club

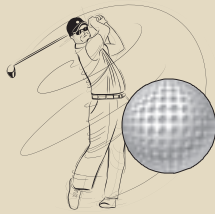








Italian American Chamber of Commerce John B. Agosta Memorial 42nd Annual Scholarship Golf Outing



The 42nd Annual John B. Agosta Golf Outing was held on Monday, June 29th. We could not have asked for a better day. There were 141 golfers in attendance, and 170 people for dinner.

As a result of the number of participants and sponsors, we raised over \$27,000 for the scholarship fund....a new record!

As you are all aware, the revenue generated from the golf outing provides funding for young adults advancing their education. Since its inception, the IACCM has given out well over \$500,000 in scholarship funding, all coming from the golf outing.

We would also like to congratulate, once again, our recipient of the 2026 Honoree of the Year, Tom Bommarito, for his outstanding dedication and service, not only to the IACCM, but to the community as well.

Tony and I would like to thank all of our sponsors. We greatly appreciate your participation and support; Jeff DiCaro and Dario Lanni of Fern Hill and their entire staff. The food and service were over the top; Andy Agosta for his guidance; Debbie Moran for her administrative expertise, the committee members, but most importantly to our volunteers, who spent the day assisting you to make sure you had an enjoyable day. Every one of you made it all possible.

Looking forward to seeing you all at next year's golf outing, which will be held on Monday, June 28, 2027.

Ron DiBartolomeo and Tony Agosta
Golf Chairmen

CREDIT CARD USAGE UPDATE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2024

"A service charge of 3% will be applied to all credit card purchases, which is not greater than our cost for acceptance." For your convenience, you may avoid this extra fee by paying with cash or check.

FESTA DELLA LIRA

(in conjunction with the general membership meeting)

**October 7, 2026
Italian American Cultural Center
43843 Romeo Plank
Clinton Township – 6:00 PM**

**REVERSE RAFFLE
WITH A GRAND
PRIZE OF \$10,000**

**PLUS OVER \$3,000 IN
ADDITIONAL CASH PRIZES**

**Hors d'oeuvres, open bar,
fabulous dinner,
50-50 raffle, basket of cheer**

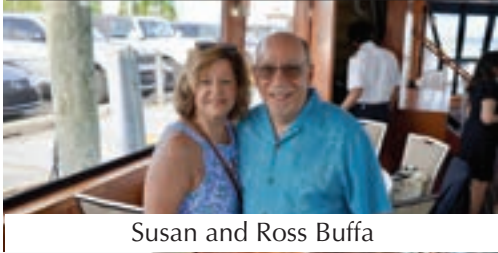
**please contact the IACCM
office for payment ASAP**

July 22nd • Full Board Meeting • IACC

The Officers, Board of Directors, and Past President's came together for some camaraderie, bocce competition, and a great summer board meeting. Joe Ventimiglia and Ron DiBartolomeo took 1st place bragging rights this year. The Italian American Cultural Center and their staff did a wonderful job with the pizza oven luncheon, and of course Alex cooked another amazing dinner!



June 11th • Infinity Detroit River Cruise



Susan and Ross Buffa



Don Lupo EXCITED for some dinner!



Brianne and Paula Badalamente





Robyn and Frank Coppola



Jodi Sgroi and Brandon Fromm enjoying the music from DJ Frank Krause



Save the Date for
La Traviata
at Detroit Opera



Sunday, November 1, 2026
2:30 PM

We are planning an outing to see Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca* at the Detroit Opera House on Sunday, November 1 at 2:30 PM. *Tosca*, a devout but tempestuous diva, lives for art—and for love. She's loved by Mario Cavaradossi, the revolutionary artist, and lusted after by the treacherous Baron Scarpia, Rome's police chief. When Scarpia viciously targets Cavaradossi, *Tosca* fights to save him. What is she willing to do for her lover?

The lush, dramatic score brings Puccini's classic thriller to life.

More details to follow. Please contact Sandy Tornberg at 586-907-6631 or sandratornberg@comcast.net if you are interested in attending.

The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Joseph Divozzo

1ST VICE PRESIDENT
Philip J. Maniaci

2ND VICE PRESIDENT
Joseph Burke

SECRETARY
Ronald A. DiBartolomeo

FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Anthony Licata, III

TREASURER
Michael Locricchio

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIRMAN
Michael Divozzo

PAST PRESIDENTS 2026
Andrew Agosta
David F. Galli

TERMS ENDING 2026
Greg Gagnon
Frank Coppola
Michel Tenaglia

TERMS ENDING 2027
Ross Buffa
Aaron Marentette
Sandra Tornberg

TERMS ENDING 2028
John DiPiazza
Honorable Julie Gatti
Leo Salvatore Terzo

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Charles Moran

PAST PRESIDENTS COUNCIL

2023 Mark Garagiola
2022 Charles Shermetaro, OD
2020 Daniel Galli
2018 David A. Lazzara
2017 Vito Pianello
2015 David F. Galli
2014 Andrew Agosta
2013 Joseph P. Ventimiglia
2011 Honorable Joseph Toia
2010 Thomas Bommarito
2009 Ned R. Piccinini
2008 Ronald A. DiBartolomeo
2007 Salvatore P. Ventimiglia
2004 Paul Calcaterra
2000 Benedetto Marrocco
1999 Augustino Russo
1994 Angelo S. Lanni
1991 Thomas B. Lanni

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."

DRESS CODE

Reminder that the Chamber does have a business casual dress code.

Appropriate business casual dress typically includes slacks or khakis, dress shirt or blouse, open-collar or polo shirt, optional tie or seasonal sport coat, a dress or skirt at knee-length or below, a tailored blazer, knit shirt or sweater, and loafers or dress shoes. **NO DENIM**
Defined as a style of clothing that is less formal than traditional business wear but is still intended to give a professional and businesslike impression.

GUEST FEE

Effective with the May 7, 2025 meeting, the NEW POLICY is as follows:

ALL GUESTS must pay the \$50 guest fee. You, as a member, can also pay this guest fee for your guest, if you wish at your cost. If your guest decides to join as a member, the \$50 will be reimbursed to their annual dues cost. Example; \$400 regular membership would be \$350 upon application approval.

Guests will be limited to 1 per meeting unless prior approval for more is given, and notice needs to be given 7 days in advance. This is to ensure there is proper seating for everyone who attends.