

In This Issue: Little Known Italian Explorers, part 1; Member Spotlight - Don Spica

*Member News & Articles*

**LICS Bollettino Periodico**

*The Digital Periodical of the  
Lancaster Italian Cultural Society*

*Volume 2 ∞ Digital Issue 3, April 2021*



LANCASTER  
ITALIAN  
CULTURAL  
SOCIETY



# L'Osservatore Lancastriano

## Member News, April 2021

Condolences to Kathy Spencer on the passing of her husband, Jim Spencer.

Condolences to Livia Riley, on the passing of her mother, Anna Neri.



**So, you never got to spend time in the kitchen with your nonna and we all know she never wrote down her recipes, nor did she measure. Here is the nonna and the directions you long to have.**

*Gina Making Lasagna:*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKOgzfgI48c>

**Click on the above link or photo to watch the video.**

## La Festa della Mamma by Mary Cae Williams

Although many people like to draw connections between the modern celebration of Mother's Day and ancient worship of goddesses who protected motherhood and marriage, there is no evidence of those connections in the history of today's festa.

The very first celebration of a Mother's Day was instituted by the Fascist government in 1933. It was called La Giornata Della Madre E Del Bambino. The focus was on paying tribute to all the mothers who gave birth to good fascist sons to keep the nation strong in the future.

In 1957 – 50 years after the day was set in the United States – a priest in Assisi decided that the second Sunday in May should also celebrate mothers in Italy. The idea was so popular that a petition was presented to Parliament. La Festa della Mamma was officially declared as the second Sunday in May for all Italy.

Today in Italy, the day is one for celebrating and pampering mothers. It is special and beloved by Italians, but is not the big, commercial extravaganza that we see in the United States. It is a time to be with the family and celebrate the love and care that mothers give their families the world over. If people cannot be there in person, they will send a card, letter, or even a poem. Also, a phone call is important. Italian phone companies record their highest volume of calls around this day.

La Festa della Mamma is a time for family to gather and enjoy one another's company with good food, good conversation, and shared love. The big difference is that Mamma will not be the one cooking for everyone. From breakfast in bed until the last "buona notte," the family will serve her, for a change.

### Member Spotlight by Mary Cae Williams

With pleasure, we thank Don Spica of RE/MAX, SmartHub Realty, for his ongoing sponsorship support of the LICS Newsletters and Bollettini. In a recent interview, Don expressed himself in quiet, modest terms.

Don's family lived in South Philadelphia, when he was born. When he was about three-years-old, his family moved to Drexel Hill. Don's father, a Certified Public Accountant, was the first of his family to move away from South Philadelphia. Both of Don's parents came from large families. In his father's family there were five children and in his mother's there were thirteen. During the 1960s, after Don's father had started the trend, his aunts and uncles began to move away from that area.

Don remembers with great fondness the large family gatherings and the close bonds that existed among all the cousins. He recalls cousins' parties that were almost as "big as Veteran's Stadium." Don's grandmother had a place at the shore in Wildwood Crest. He remembers gangs of cousins staying with her. The girls slept in bedrooms; parents had a section for themselves; but the boys just slept all over the house. Sundays at his grandmother's house were also great times with the cousins. Summers held a special treat for all the children. It was then, when school was out, that they began their visits to each other's houses. It became a kind of progressive summer camp. For a change of scenery, they would stay a few days or a week with one of the aunts or uncles. The older cousins always looked out for the younger ones and let them tag

along. The love and warmth of the adults had translated into the closeness of the younger generation.

As Don reminisced, he mentioned a change that brought him sadness. When he was young there was always lots of cooking from scratch. Christmas parties included homemade pastas, all the fish dishes and the many desserts. As time went on, only the desserts, including pizzelles, napoleons, and many different cookies were homemade. And now, "we just buy it all." Don felt sad that his own children had not been able to experience all the times with the cousins and the wonderful, traditional food made by hand.

Thinking back over the years, one image that stood out was the abundance of food. In every household, there was cooking from early in the morning until the evening meal was finished.

Delicious foods like fresh, handmade pasta, veal, fish, and meatballs were regularly available. There was always room for one, two, or more unexpected guests at the table. No one was ever turned away hungry.

Don is sad he no longer gets together with his cousins. The family is now spread all over the country. His children are beginning to connect with the larger family through Facebook, but he misses those days of closeness when everyone lived

just an hour or so away from each other.

Don moved to Lancaster County about 34 years ago. He got into the field of real estate "late in the game" and is currently an Associate Broker. He has made it his



**Don Spica**  
Realtor, Associate Broker  
ABR, CRS, CSP, GRI, SRES  
Cell: (717) 575-4603  
Office: (717) 208-4444  
DonSpica@gmail.com

business to become as well educated in the field as possible. He continued to take courses and took the tests to "help me to help my clients." Don subscribes to the concept that the more knowledgeable he is, the better he is able to serve his clients. He feels blessed to have loyal clients. He did say that these have been challenging times with a slow year. He also shared his faith and confidence that we will come out of this into better times again.

Don shared a heart-warming story of this terrible plague year. About 30 of his cousins were able to have a Zoom gathering with their Aunt Sarah who turned 95. She is one of the oldest of that generation still with us. Each cousin told a story of remembrance of the love they had received from Aunt Sarah. Don described her as quiet, strong, and protective of all the children. Aunt Sarah was kind and loving and held their large family together through the years. Don expressed the power and depth of his aunt's love when he described her having "the face of God."

Thank you, Don, for sharing your precious memories of your large, warm and loving Italian-American family.

### Italian Explorers and Early Settlers in America by Marian Caroselli - Part 1

Much is written about Italian explorers such as Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, John Cabot, and Giovanni da Verrazzano, who were active from 1492-1524. For many years Italy was too weak, poor and disunited to seek overseas colonies of its own. In fact, Italian colonization was limited to the period from 1890 to 1941, and included the present day countries of Libya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia. Individual Italians, however, were nobly or ignobly associated with a variety of explorations within what has become the United States. In our review of these explorers and adventurers and their exploits, we can also take a moment to realize that, often, native peoples suffered as a result of their arrival.

A number of Italians in the employ of Spain and France were involved in exploring and mapping their territories and in establishing settlements; but, this did not lead to the permanent presence of Italians in America.



In 1539, Fray Marco da Nizza (Left) explored the territory that later became the states of Arizona and New Mexico. He was a missionary and

Franciscan friar. He is credited with being the first European in what is now Arizona.

A small wave of Protestants, known as Waldensians, who were of French and northern Italian heritage (specifically

Piedmontese), arrived during the 17th century. They spread out across what would become New York, New Jersey and the Lower Delaware River regions.

Spain and France were Catholic countries and sent many missionaries to convert the native American people. Included among these missionaries were numerous Italians. Alessandro Geraldini, known for his support of Christopher Columbus, was the first Catholic bishop in the Americas, at Santo Domingo.

Father François-Joseph Bressani (Francesco Giuseppe Bressani) labored among the Algonquin and Huron peoples in the early 17th century. He and his companions were captured by Mohawk warriors who took them to their village in present-day New York. There, they ritually tortured and mutilated Father Bressani, cutting off nine fingers. He was finally ransomed by Dutch traders from present day Albany and returned to France. He later returned to serve the Huron missions but due to failing health, retired to Italy and died in Florence in 1672. The Southwest and California were explored and mapped by Italian (Tyrolean) Jesuit priest Eusebio Kino (Chino) in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. He was a missionary, geographer, explorer, cartographer and astronomer. Kino opposed the slavery and compulsory hard labor in the silver mines forced on the native people by the Spaniards. This caused great controversy among his co-missionaries, many of whom acted according to the laws imposed by Spain on their territory. He proved that the Baja California Peninsula is not an island by leading an overland expedition there. By the time of

his death he had established 24 missions and visitas (country chapels or visiting stations). His statue, commissioned by the state of Arizona, is displayed in the United States Capitol Visitor Center.

Henri de Toni (Enrico de Tonti) was a Sicilian-born French military officer, explorer and voyager who assisted Rene-Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, with North American exploration and colonization from 1678 to 1686. De Tonti was one of the first explorers to navigate and sail the upper Great Lakes. He and Cavalier also sailed the Illinois and Mississippi, which they traveled to its mouth and claimed for Louis XIV of France. De Tonti established the first permanent European settlement in the lower Mississippi valley, known as Poste de Arhansea, making him "The Father of Arkansas". With LaSalle, he co-founded New Orleans and was governor of the Louisiana Territory for the next 20 years. During his career and time in these early settlements he was involved in both fighting against and alliances with native American tribes. His brother, Alphonse de Tonty, (Alfonso de Tonti), with French explorer Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, was the co-founder of Detroit in 1701 and was its acting colonial governor for 12 years.

Italian exploration did not lead to Italian settlements. Italians, however, were instrumental in the exploration, colonization, and missionary work of Europeans in North America. In our next article, we will discuss some of the Italians who first settled in what became the United States of America.

Please support our sponsors. To become a sponsor, contact Pete Costanzo: PCostanzo@janney.com



**MANHEIM TOWNSHIP** MILLERSVILLE  
 3110 Lititz Pike 441 N. George St.  
 717.560.5100 717.872.5041

**LANCASTER CITY** STRASBURG  
 414 E. King St. 7 South Decatur St.  
 717.393.9661 717.687.7644

**LITITZ - SPACHT-SNYDER**  
 127 S. Broad St.  
 717.626.2317

SnyderFuneralHome.com



Chad & Chip Snyder

**Enhancing & Maintaining Properties since 1992**

Three expert divisions, one simple solution...



**JANITORIAL DIVISION**

- Covid-19 sanitizations • Daily office cleaning
- Paper & soap supplies • Expert floor care

**LAWN/TREE/SHRUB DIVISION**

- Fertilizations/weed & Insect/disease control

**LANDSCAPE DIVISION**

- Unique landscape designs & renovations
- Custom walls/walks/patios • Spring/fall clean-up
- Fiberglass Pool Installation & Water features

WWW.CLEANNRG.NET 717.355.9618



CONTACT US TO DISCUSS HOW WE CAN HELP YOU CONNECT YOUR LIFE AND FINANCES.



**PETER L. COSTANZO, JR., CFP®, CRPC®, AWMA®, AAMS®**  
 Executive Vice President / Wealth Management, Financial Advisor  
 1650 Crooked Oak Drive, Suite 100, Lancaster, PA 17601  
 T 717.519.4188 | TF 800.548.2104 | F 717.581.1272  
 CostanzoWM@janney.com | www.CostanzoWM.com

© JANNEY MONTGOMERY SCOTT LLC • MEMBER: NYSE, FINRA, SIPC • REF: 174832-1220



**ROSEMARY LA FATA**  
 REALTOR®, RRC, CMRS  
**Charles & ASSOCIATES**  
**REAL ESTATE, Inc.**  
 241 A Rohrerstown Rd • Lancaster, PA 17603

(717) 299-2100  
 (717) 299-0988 Fax  
 (717) 575-4254 Cell  
 rosemarylafata@comcast.net  
 www.charles-associates.com



**Bollettino/Newsletter Committee:**

Mary Cae Williams

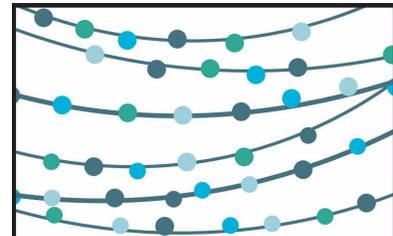
Marian Caroselli

John Day

Rudy DeLaurentis

Please email us with questions, comments, and member news at:

LICSNEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM



**LIVE MUSIC**

that will make your event the most memorable it can be!

Mastro Music will connect you with a professional & experienced party & dance band for your reception

Weddings, Parties & Reunions:  
 All your music needs from one source

Party Band • Big Band • Latin  
 Acoustic • Classical • Rock

**Peter Mastropietro**

**MASTRO MUSIC**

pmastromusic@gmail.com  
 pmastromusic.com • Lancaster, PA

610-898-7877  
www.russofoodmarket.com

Distributing To Restaurants, Pizzerias, & Specialty Stores.  
 Come Visit Our Retail Store...610.898.1918  
 For Imported Italian Products!  
 1150 Bern Rd, Wyomissing 19610



## PARTS 1&2 OF EVOLUTION OF ITALIAN LANGUAGE

LICS invites you to an online lecture  
with Rossella Chiolini Bagley



**Rossella Chiolini Bagley** specializes in both Spanish and Italian Languages, she received her Master of Arts in Spanish Language and Literature at SDSU. She teaches at Colleges, Universities, HOI, Italian Cultural Center, private settings and online tutoring. She is a certified on-line professor.

Rossella has been living in San Diego, CA for 22 years, originally from Pavia, a town located in Lombardy just South of Milan in Northern Italy. She has been an active member of the HOI since 2000 and founded, created and developed an Italian program at the HOI for adults with devoted following. Visit her website at:

[www.illuminalanguages.com](http://www.illuminalanguages.com)

### On April 18, the following topics will be covered:

- Famous Italian body language & gestures
- The use & misused English words integrated in the Italian language

### On April 25, the following topics will be covered:

- The change of the language with immigration
- The death of the Subjunctive

### Time & Places:

**Sunday, April 18th & April 25**  
3:00pm on Zoom.

Reserve your spot by 4/11/2021

This program will be offered to additional groups after March 22, so make your reservation ASAP.

To receive the link to join the webinar email to:

[licsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:licsnewsletter@gmail.com)