

IL MESSAGGIO

Promoting and Preserving Italian Culture in Vermont



Illustration: Submitted by Gianna Morin, great grand-daughter of VICA co-founder Celeste Hahn.

Attività ed Eventi

Not all upcoming events are listed below. Find more information in this issue of *Il Messaggio* or on the [Vermont Italian Cultural Association website](http://VermontItalianCulturalAssociation.org). RSVP on the website unless otherwise noted.

Una Passeggiata a Burlington; Wednesdays 5–8 p.m.

Details on p. 3

Bocce at Oakledge Park; Sundays: 6/15, 7/20, 8/16, 9/14; 11:00–2:30

Details on p. 3

VICA Social Gathering at Zero Gravity; June 23, 5:30–7:00 p.m.

Details on p. 3

Amici Aperitivo at Sweet Simone's; June 20, 5–7 p.m.

Details on p. 4

Wine Pairing with Chef Stefano; July 18, 6 p.m.

Details on p. 4

VICA Annual Picnic; August 17; 11:30–3 p.m.

Details on p. 4

Italian Book Club; June 23 and August 25, 10:15 a.m.

Details on p. 5

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Vermont Italian Cultural Association

The Vermont Italian Cultural Association, founded in 1983, is an all volunteer non-profit dedicated to preserving and sharing Italian culture. The organization is open to anyone interested in Italian culture, arts, language, history and other aspects of Italian civilization. We sponsor a broad range of activities throughout the year, including presentations, language groups, art and sculpture exhibits, film, luncheons, bocce socials, and more. Our Scholarships and Grants program provides financial awards for those interested in pursuing further study in Italian culture.

Board of Directors

Lisa DeNatale, *President*

Chris Centracchio, *Vice President*

Jason Hackerman, *Interim Treasurer*

Annette Rexroad, *Secretary*

Alessandro Bertoni, Alessandra Ciongoli Caulderon, Tony Federico, Peter Guarco, Tara Hamilton,

Nina Mazuzan, Virginia Merriam, Bob Paolini, Jeff Roberts, Gabé Tufo, David Tomasi

Dal Presidente (from the President)

Cari amici,

This June marks the end of my second full term as VICA president (four years if you're not keeping track). Over this period, I have met and been introduced to so many interesting people with fascinating backgrounds and stories to tell. While our shared Italian heritage (or for some, their love of Italian culture) has connected us, our friendships have been sustained through community; sharing what VICA has to offer. I have been reflecting on this theme recently.

I believe cultural organizations play an essential role in building community. Fostering connections and a sense of belonging come from sharing common interests and values. Often these define who we are at our core.

Beyond building community, VICA's essence is about nurturing the soul. Nurturing our souls is essential to experiencing joy; seeing the beauty in the world, finding and enjoying those things that bring us pleasure. Those moments that move us, sometimes to tears. Joy may come from listening to an Italian aria, tasting a lovely chianti, conversing in Italian, savoring a delicious Italian meal, experiencing a beautiful Italian film, and of course, traveling to Italy where all five senses are awakened.

Sharing and celebrating the richness of Italian culture is what guides VICA's programming and activities. I invite and encourage you to attend an event, participate or become involved as a volunteer. I hope you find that VICA brings you as much joy as it brings me.

Alla prossima,

Lisa DeNatale



Benvenuto a VICA!

Your membership helps sustain our mission to preserve and promote Italian culture in Vermont. As a VICA member you have access to member-only events, including amici gatherings and bocce socials. Members are eligible for discounts on books, wine, film, and more when combined with a VICA event. See some of the exclusive offers below.

As a VICA member you are eligible for discounts and special offers. Check out your member benefits:

- ◇ FREE Italian language instruction/conversation
- ◇ ACCESS CVU; 15% off Italian Language classes (in-person and virtual); classes are offered in the fall and spring; discount codes will be listed in *Il Messaggio* prior to each session
- ◇ AR Market: 10% off your purchase in the market "where Vermont meets Italy"; identify yourself as a VICA member at checkout; Main Street, Barre
- ◇ Cooking with Stephanie; 20% off any private or public class instructed only by Stephanie. Discount also applied to merchandise or gift cards. Use Code VICA20. Visit [Cooking with Stephanie](#)
- ◇ Discounts are frequently offered to VICA members in conjunction with specific events. Details are described in VICA email announcements.
- ◇ Exclusive member-only events

Annunci

VICA Board of Directors Meeting: June 17, 5:30–7:00 p.m. at the Essex Inn and Resort. VICA members may attend by contacting the president in advance at vtitalianculturalassoc@gmail.com.

Il Messaggio is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December. The following people contributed to this issue: Katya d'Angelo, Moira Daly, Lisa DeNatale, Angela Glasser, Tara Hamilton, and Virginia Merriam.

Attività

Una Passeggiata a Burlington (A Stroll in Burlington)

Wednesdays, 5–8 p.m., Church Street, Burlington

If you've traveled to Italy you have likely observed or participated in the centuries-old tradition of the Italian *passeggiata*. A *passeggiata* is a traditional evening stroll in the central square or main pedestrian area of a town by its residents. It's an integral part of Italian culture that brings out everyone—young and old—to socialize and connect with their community. People walk slowly. There is no rush and there is no destination. In fact, it is normal to walk from one end of the street to the other and then back again several times.

It's a time to shop, stop to enjoy an aperitivo or gelato, or simply connect with friends and strangers alike.

About 80 people participated at the inaugural *passeggiata*, arriving between 5 and 8 p.m. It was a wonderful opportunity to chat with friends and meet new people. Many of us enjoyed dinner, a glass of wine, and popping into shops. Over the next several weeks more activities are planned during the *passeggiata* in collaboration with the Church Street Marketplace.

Burlington's *passeggiata*, initiated by VICA president Lisa DeNatale, is an effort to bring the community together. Join us every Wednesday. Bring your family and friends. It's just one more way to experience *la dolce vita* in Vermont.



Bocce Social and Potluck

Oakledge Park, Burlington, 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Sundays: 6/15, 7/20, 8/16, 9/14

VICA will once again host bocce socials for VICA members and friends and family. Bring a dish to share and your favorite beverage (no glass please). Paper goods are provided. *RSVP on the VICA website so you will be notified of any cancellations.*



VICA Social Gathering

VERMONT ITALIAN
CULTURAL ASSOCIATION | Est. 1983

Monday, June 23, 5:30–7:00 p.m.

Zero Gravity Brewery in Burlington

VICA is hosting this get-together as a chance to connect, share stories, and celebrate our community and Italian culture in a relaxed, fun setting. Whether you're a longtime member, new to VICA, or simply curious about what we do, we'd love for you to join us. Feel free to bring friends or family. You don't need to be a VICA member to attend. A few of us will be there to greet everyone and help spark some great conversation. Please RSVP [here](#) if you wish to attend so we can get a table big enough to seat everyone.

Attività



Barre Social Club, 105 N. Main St., Ste. 102, Barre
Friday July 18, 6 p.m.

\$45 per person: wine tasting and small plates.

In partnership with VICA.

Join us for a tasting event featuring four handpicked wines, each perfectly paired with a bite prepared by Chef Stefano Coppola..
Limit 20 people.

Amici Gatherings

Register for both events on the [VICA website events page](#).

Sweet Simone's for un aperitivo

40 Bridge St., Richmond

Friday, June 20, 4-8 p.m. (VICA members will meet 5-7)

Join VICA friends and family for a fun end-of-week gathering in a wonderful atmosphere.

Amici Dinner at Sotto Enoteca

150 St Paul Street, Burlington

Wednesday, July 16; 5:30 p.m.

Join the passeggiata on Church Street after dinner (see p. 3). Guests can order off either the Trattoria Delia or Sotto Enoteca menu and pay separately. Up to 14 people.



VICA Annual Picnic

Sunday, August 17; 11:30-3 p.m.

North Beach Pavilion; Burlington

Join VICA members and their families at our annual summer picnic. We will share Italian food, music, and traditions in celebration of our Vermont community. For VICA members and their family and friends.

Please RSVP on the VICA website.

Details:

- ◇ Lunch begins at 12 p.m.
- ◇ Bring a dish to share and your favorite beverage.
- ◇ No glass containers please.



Attività: Libri

Italian Book Club: *Il Re del Gelato*

S. Burlington Public Library; 180 Market Street

Next meetings: June 23 and August 25 at 10:15 a.m.

Un'indagine che precede *Sabbia Nera*: «Prima di *Sabbia nera* Vanina era a Catania già da un anno e aveva risolto altri casi. Ho pensato di raccontarvene uno» (Cristina Cassar Scalia).

Arrivata da poco a Catania, Vanina sta facendo conoscenza con la città quando le piomba addosso un caso delicato, di quelli che richiederebbero anche un po' di tatto. Non proprio la sua dote principale. Per fortuna attorno a sé ha una squadra di gente in gamba, collaboratori preziosi che nonostante il suo carattere spigoloso hanno imparato subito ad apprezzarla. A fare il resto ci pensano l'istinto e il metodo investigativo che segue da sempre: scavare nel passato delle vittime.

An investigation that precedes [the sequel] *Black Sand*: "Before *Black Sand*, Vanina had already been in Catania for a year and had solved other cases. I thought I'd tell you about one" (Cristina Cassar Scalia).

Having recently arrived in Catania, Vanina is getting to know the city when a delicate case lands on her, one that would also require a bit of tact. Not exactly her main talent. Luckily, she has a team of capable people around her, valuable collaborators who, despite her prickly character, have quickly learned to appreciate her. Instinct, and the investigative method she has always followed do the rest: digging into the victims' pasts.

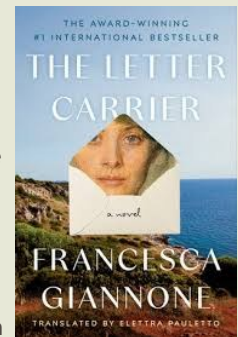


The Letter Carrier (La portalettere) by Italian author Francesca Giannone

When I first starting reading *The Letter Carrier* by Francesca Giannone (on sale 7/1), I was amazed at how quickly I was transported to small-town southern Italy in the 1930s, observing all the town gossip, stolen glances and secret romances, and making pesto right alongside the complex characters in this author's debut novel. The book was first published in Italy in early 2023 where it quickly became the top-selling fiction title that year.

The Letter Carrier tells the story of Anna, a modern city woman who has moved to the tight-knit village of Lizzanello, where her husband grew up and his brother currently resides. From the beginning, Anna feels like an outcast with her disinterest in local gossip and passion for reading and being able to do all the things that men can do. When she learns that the post office is hiring, she leaps at the opportunity. And despite many doubting the idea of a female letter carrier, Anna soon becomes the invisible thread connecting the town as she delivers letters between clandestine lovers, families waiting to hear news of loves ones away at war, and even helping those who can't read.

This book has something for everyone: an immersive setting, strong female characters, a web of tangled love connections, a sweeping historical framework, and heartfelt relationships – it's no wonder this book has been a phenomenon in Italy. *The Letter Carrier* has been expertly translated into English and will be available in the United States on July 1. Pre-orders are available at [Bridgeside Books](#) in Waterbury and at [Phoenix Books](#) in Burlington, Essex, and Rutland. Support local independent bookstores (and VICA partners) and preorder today!

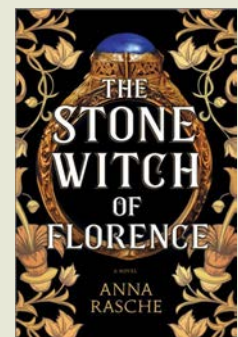


The Stone Witch by Anna Rasche

Italian Book Recommendation

from Katya d'Angelo, owner of *Bridgeside Books* in Waterbury

Set in the 14th century as the black death is ravaging Europe, this story follows Ginevra, accused of witchcraft for her ability to heal the sick. She's summoned back to Florence after an exile, not for her skills to cure the plague but for something entirely different. A mix of folk magic, medicine, religion, history, and suspense, this book is perfect for fans of *The Lost Apothecary*.



Italian Language Learning Opportunities

Ongoing opportunities around the state to speak Italian with amici!

Parli Italiano? Burlington

Fletcher Free Library; Local History Room
Every Thursday: 12-1 p.m.

Conversation Social in St. Albans

Hosted by Mimmo's Pizzeria & Restaurant
22 South Main Street

Next meeting: June 9: 6:45-8:30 (the group will pause for July and August)

We welcome any and all abilities to speak Italian with other language learners. Reservations are required. Seating is limited. Beverages and food are available for purchase.

Italian Conversation Social in Barre

Hosted by Pearl Street Pizza, Main Street
Last Wednesday of every month; 5-8 p.m.

This is an opportunity to speak Italian with other language learners and native Italian speakers. All are welcome. The event is **free**.

Food and beverages are available for purchase. Reservations are required. Go to [VICA website](#) to reserve a spot at the table!



Italian Conversation Group, Waterbury Bridgeside Books, Stowe Street

Last Tuesday of the month: 5:30 p.m. Next meeting: June 24 (the group will pause for July and August).

An informal Italian conversation/social group meets at Bridgeside Books, but sometimes elsewhere. All levels welcome, even if you don't speak much at all!

Sometimes we have a theme or a little presentation, sometimes it's just whatever is going on in our lives; often there is some cibo e vino.

Email Katya d'Angelo if you'd like to be included on the email list: info@bridgesidebooks.com.

And, don't miss VICA's UPDATED Italian language [resource guide](#)!

Barton Conversation Group

Barton Public Library, 100 Church Street
Every Monday: 4-5 p.m. (the group will pause for July and August)

Always wanted to speak Italian? Already speak some and want to keep learning? Just beginning and want to have fun practicing with others? Join us for Italian Conversation; All levels welcome. Contact Joanne at bartonitaliangroup@gmail.com.

Parliamo Italiano a Brattleboro

Hosted by Martocci's, 75 Elliot St.
Monthly on the last Thursday: 4:30-6:30 p.m.

We welcome any and all abilities to speak Italian with other language learners. Reservations are required. Seating is limited. Beverages and food are available for purchase.

Email: parlareitalianovt@gmail.com

Did you know if you are 65 or older and a Vermont resident you can audit classes at UVM? The University's Department of Romance Languages and Cultures offers several Italian language and cultural courses. Enroll at [UVM](#) in the late summer for the fall semester.



More Italian Language Learning Opportunities

Courses taught by VICA member Nicole Librandi

Contact nicolibrandi2@gmail.com for information on which course best fits your skillset and goals.

In-person course at the Charlotte Senior Center

Italian for Beginners (IfB): August 29, September 5, 12, 19, 26, and October 23; Fridays 10–11 a.m.

This course offering depends upon enrollment.

Register at the CSC in person, by mail, or by telephone at 802-425-6345. Make payment to the CSC, PO Box 207, 212 Ferry Road, Charlotte, VT 05445. Write the full name of the course in the memo section.

The following two courses are offered via Zoom

Fridays on August 29, September 5, 12, 19, 26, and October 3

Register with Nicole via email by August 15. Space is limited. Send check for \$50 to 920 Upper Meehan Road, Bristol, VT 05443 or pay via Zelle at nicolibrandi2@gmail.com.

- ◆ **Italian for Continuing and Advanced Beginners (IfCAB);** 1:30–2:30 p.m.
- ◆ **Italian Advanced (IA);** 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Intensive Individualized Italian Course: Content is tailored to student. Six-week sessions. Contact Nicole to coordinate availability. Fee \$300.

Cycle in Liguria with Food.Stories.Travel.

October 25–31, 2025

Tour Highlights

- ◆ Exposure to local culture and history with native, bilingual, experienced tour leaders
- ◆ Tastings of regional Slow Food Presidia and visits to local wine, focaccia, and olive oil makers
- ◆ Experience the authentic Mediterranean diet through local traditional cuisine featuring fresh and seasonal ingredients
- ◆ Enjoy some of the best whites of the regions such as Pigato and Vermentino and the red wines of Ormeasco and Rossese
- ◆ Elegant and traditional accommodation in hand-selected 3- and 4-star hotels
- ◆ Strolls through must-see classic western Ligurian towns such as Alassio, Laigueglia, Imperia, and Sanremo and the small villages of Cervo, Bussana Vecchia, Parasio, and Dolcedo
- ◆ Exhilarating rides!

More information at [FoodStoriesTravel](https://www.foodstoriestravel.com)



VICA Welcomes Chef Mario Marini to Vermont

Submitted by Lisa DeNatale

VICA was honored to welcome Chef Mario Marini to Vermont as part of his recent visit to Boston. Marini is a chef and master butcher who traveled from Parma, a city in the heart of Emilia-Romagna. The region is sometimes referred to as the "breadbasket of Italy" because of its extensive agricultural production and rich culinary heritage.

Chef Mario is a graduate of ALMA, the School of Italian Culinary Arts. He wears many hats, including that of the head of Territorial Marketing and City Branding for the Parma region. He is also the President of the "[Parma Food Museum Association](#)", a collection of nine museums, each dedicated to one of the PDO/PGI products typical of the region. Mario also operates [Il Cielo di Strela](#) restaurant in an *agriturismo*, a lodging with a restaurant at a working farm in the hills above Parma. As Chef Ambassador of ALMA, Marini travels to events and exhibitions sharing his deep passion for Italian gastronomic traditions.



A special four-course dinner was held on June 4 at the Essex Resort & Spa's Junction restaurant for 40 invited guests. The dinner was planned in collaboration with Greg Lang, Director of Culinary/Executive Chef at the resort. The menu, curated by Chef Mario, featured dishes prepared using local ingredients from Vermont producers including Trencher's Farmhouse, Monti Verdi Salumi, La Panciata, Vermont Salumi, and Parish Hill Creamery. The Junction's open kitchen format, which includes a chef's table alongside the preparation counter, allowed guests to observe and interact with Chef Mario and the Essex culinary staff.

The event was sponsored by the Consolato Generale d'Italia a Boston. The Consul General, Arnaldo Minuti, hosted the evening in celebration of La Festa della Repubblica (Italian National Day). He was joined by his colleagues from the Boston Consulate including Silvia Salomoni, Paolo Gaudenzi, Ivana Marroncelli, and Carlo Carratelli.

While this was Chef Mario's first visit to Vermont, he knows well the shared values between Italy and Vermont—places united by a passion for supporting local farmers, celebrating regional flavors, and preserving culinary traditions that shape our communities.



Before leaving Vermont, Chef Mario led a demonstration in the Essex Resort's Viking Room, a holdover from when the resort operated as the New England Culinary Institute (NECI). The room includes several Viking stoves and tables arranged to showcase demonstrations and cooking classes. Students from area culinary programs and technical schools were invited to attend. Mario's Vermont tour concluded with visits to area producers including 5th Quarter Butchery in Waitsfield and Monti Verdi Salumi in New Haven, followed by dinner at the Inn at Shelburne Farms one of Vermont's pioneering farm to table restaurants.

Grazie di tutto, Cuoco Mario. Speriamo di rivederti presto in Vermont! (Thank you for everything, Chef Mario. We hope to see you again soon in Vermont!)

Scholarships and Grants Committee Announces 2025 Recipients

By Lisa DeNatale

Each year the Vermont Italian Cultural Association awards up to three grants to individuals seeking to broaden their knowledge of Italian culture. In 2024, VICA named one of these grants to honor retired Senator Patrick Leahy, whose maternal grandparents immigrated to Vermont from the Friuli Venezia Giulia region of Italy. The Leahys have been VICA members since 2012.

At VICA's Carnevale fundraiser in March, Nicole Mandeville of Richmond, Vermont, was announced as the first recipient of the Senator and Marcelle Leahy award. The owner and director of the Burlington Forest School, a place-based preschool for children ages 3–5, Nicole will travel to Reggio Emilia, to attend the North American Reggio Emilia Association conference titled “Deepening Research with the 100 Languages.” She will be attending with a cohort of other educators from Vermont and plans to share what she has learned with her staff and other early childhood educators upon her return. Senator Leahy expressed, “Marcelle and I are thrilled that Nicole, a dedicated and innovative early childhood educator, will be the first recipient of this grant.”

One of the distinct requirements for recipients of the Senator and Marcelle Leahy award is that they must have Italian heritage. Nicole's maternal great-grandparents, Vincenzo and Rafaela (Bucci) Festino, along with Nunzio and Maria (DePinto) DePalma, emigrated from Corato/Bari, Puglia to Boston in the early 1900s.

In addition to Nicole, Stacy Hopkins of Hartland, Vermont, received a \$1,500 grant to attend Alchemia Contemporary Jewelry School in Florence, for a two-week intensive course. Trained in Florence as a jeweler 25 years ago, Stacy will reconnect with the language, people, and culture that were formative to her development as an artist and jeweler. When she returns, Hopkins plans to create a solo exhibit at Scavenger, her gallery in White River Junction, including an artist's talk to share what she learned from renowned Florentine artisans and goldsmiths.

This year's award recipients reinforce the cultural value of our grant program. Both Stacy and Nicole impressed the Scholarships and Grants committee with their commitment to Italian culture and desire to expand their skills, knowledge, and passion for their fields. We look forward to them sharing their experiences with VICA and the broader community.



Stacy Hopkins in her studio

Follow VICA on Instagram and Facebook.
Stay up to date on all activities and news!



VICA—Vermont Italian Cultural Association



vtitalianassoc

Bellissime Conessioni!

By Angela Glasser

Carlotta Levorato is one of VICA's rare members who hails from Italy. She is from Padua in the Veneto region and moved to Vermont about a year and a half ago to be with her daughter, Cici (14), who is attending the Green Mountain Valley School in Fayston.

VICA member Tara Hamilton and I met for coffee with Carlotta at Three Mountain Cafe in Waitsfield in late April. Tara and I were both curious how she was finding it to live in Vermont, being so far from her native country. What was supposed to be a quasi-interview turned into a morning-long *chiacchierata* (chat)!

While Carlotta has been in Vermont with her daughter, her husband has been coaching U.S. college fencing, first at Harvard, and now at Penn State, where he is the head coach. So, Carlotta will be splitting her time between Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Italy for the next few years. An accountant in Italy, she was soon headed back to Italy when we met in late April to be there for the Italian tax season, which ends in June.

Carlotta described her first year in Vermont as somewhat difficult because of the language barrier and the long winters during which there aren't a lot of activities and everyone seems to stay inside, other than when they are skiing, of course. Now that she has met more people and her language skills have improved, she is enjoying her time in Vermont and has gotten involved with some VICA-sponsored events, like the Waterbury conversation sessions at Bridgeside Books.

Over the course of the morning, Tara and I shared stories with Carlotta about both having recently bought apartments in Italy. Tara has dual U.S./Italian citizenship and I am working on getting Italian citizenship through my grandfather. We spent over two hours comparing notes on the benefits of dual citizenship, taxes and home ownership, the best Italian phone carrier, the ins and outs of getting the cheapest train tickets in Italy, favorite places to visit in Italy and, among other things, the cost of coffee and wine in Italy versus the U.S. The time flew by and the three of us made plans to stay in touch and to try to meet up again in both countries.

After the meeting, Carlotta sent a lovely note to Tara and me, some excerpts of which follow:



"Pensavo che avremmo chiacchierato una mezz'oretta o al massimo un'ora, e invece abbiamo passato tutta la mattina insieme. È stato davvero bello! Mi sono sentita subito a mio agio e, in certi momenti, mi sembrava di guardarmi allo specchio: avevamo tantissime cose in comune! Siamo tutte mamme, viviamo negli stessi posti — non solo qui in Vermont, ma anche in Italia ed alcuni luoghi per me speciali, come le Dolomiti. Sì, proprio come davanti a uno specchio: io con il mio italiano qui, e voi con il vostro inglese in Italia... le stesse emozioni! E con il nostro 'Italianese' siamo riuscite a capirci benissimo. È proprio vero: la lingua è un ponte che unisce le persone!"

(I thought we'd chat for half an hour or maybe an hour at most, but instead we spent the whole morning together. It was truly lovely! I really wanted to thank you for your time... I immediately felt at ease and, at times, I felt like I was looking in the mirror: we had so many things in common! We are all mothers, we live in the same places — not only here in Vermont, but also in Italy and some places that are special to me, such as the Dolomites. Yes, just like in front of a mirror: me with my Italian here, and you with your English in Italy... the same emotions! And with our "Italianese" we were able to understand each other very well. It's really true: language is a bridge that unites people!)

The value of VICA in the lives of its members is evident in the last part of Carlotta's note: *"Dal mio primo incontro con VICA, al pranzo con Lisa, e poi con le conversazioni in italiano, ho avuto l'onore di conoscere tante bellissime persone, ognuna con la sua storia, ma tutte in qualche modo legate al mio Paese."*

(From my first meeting with VICA, to lunch with Lisa, and then with conversations in Italian, I had the honor of meeting many beautiful people, each with their own story, but all in some way linked to my country.)

Pope Leo XIV, the First Italian American Pope

Reprinted with permission from *We the Italians* (<https://www.wetheitalians.com>).



By *We the Italians* Editorial Staff

Pope Leo XIV also has Italian ancestry, similar to Pope Francis, who came from across the world. Robert Francis Prevost's grandfather was born in Italy on June 24, 1876, the feast day of St. John, the patron saint of Turin. The individual listed as John R. Prevost in a death certificate and a 1950 census could very well have been born in Italy as Giovanni Prevosto.

There are also similarities with a Giovanni Pietro Felice Prevosto from Settimo Rottaro, a small town in the province of Turin. In the early 20th century, many individuals with the "Prevosto" surname left this area. Immigration archives, like those from Ellis Island, show a substantial number of people arriving from there, where the surname Prevosto is quite common, likely originating from the ecclesiastical title "prevosto," which referred to the office of provost.

Eventually, Giovanni, a professor of languages, emigrated from Europe to the United States, where he passed away on May 22, 1960. He married Suzanne Louise Marie Fabre, and their son, Louis Marius Prevost, was born in Chicago in 1920. Louis married Mildred Agnes Martinez in 1949, and from that union, the newly elected pope was born in Chicago in 1955. It's another tale of migration, similar to Jorge Bergoglio's.

This makes the new pope, Leo XIV, not only the first American pope but also the first Italian American pope.

But there's even more. This is further explained by Charles Marsala, Ambassador of *We the Italians* in Louisiana. "Much is being written and on TV about Pope Leo's connection to New Orleans. With some research, I found that one of his maternal great-great-grandfathers, Giacomo Martino, was born in 1806 in San Remo Italy," Charles says. "

It appears Giacomo Martino's name became Jacques Martinez in the 1820s after he arrived in New Orleans. He married Marguerite Cadeneth and had a son, Jacques Jr. in 1823. Jacques married Marie Rosa Ramos in 1840 and had a son named Joseph in 1864. Joseph was born in Haiti. Perhaps this had something to do with the War for Southern Independence. It appears the family left New Orleans during the war and returned back to New Orleans following the war. Jacques Martinez would have been 37-years old when the war started, which is an age that normally is considered eligible for being drafted or part of the European Brigade that became New Orleans auxiliary police force in 1862. However, by 1861, Jacques and Marie Rosa had six children under ten years old. For the safety of the children, they may have left America during the war. Joseph would marry Louise Baquie in 1887. They moved to Chicago where Pope Leo's mom was born and married another Italian-American. Two of Pope Leo's aunts were nuns."

Pope Leo XIV has also been connected to a relative who lives in Italy: Carmen Cecilia Cristina Prevost Navea, born in 1961 in Peru, who has lived in San Severino Marche since 2015. She says that she shares a great-grandfather with the pope.

Ci Siamo Divertiti a Carnevale!



A good time was had by all at this year's Carnevale on March 8 at the Essex Resort and Spa. Over 180 guests were in attendance, many in costume and most in masks, for a festive evening of Italian music, food, and fun! VICA was delighted to welcome both new and longstanding members who came together in celebration of our Italian heritage and community.



The event was a fundraiser for the VICA Scholarships and Grants Program, which supports individuals whose pursuits are consistent with our mission. More than \$10,000 was raised through ticket sales and proceeds from the silent auction. Many thanks to all who bid on items generously donated by area businesses, including many VICA members, and congratulations to all the highest bidders who went home with some wonderful products and services.



VICA President Lisa DeNatale served as emcee for the evening that included distinguished guests retired Senator Patrick Leahy and Marcelle Leahy, as well as Ivana Marroncelli, the Director of Education Office from the Italian Consulate in Boston. A highlight of the evening was performances of Italian arias by the 2024 grant recipients, Cristina Escobedo and Jack Dodd.



Many thanks to all in attendance who brought family and friends to share in the festivities. We hope to continue the tradition of Carnevale in 2026. Watch this space for additional information and to get involved! Please share any feedback on the evening by sending an email to vtitalianculturalassoc@gmail.com.



The evening was captured in photos by Eaton Photo as shown here!



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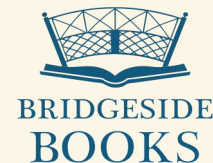
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