



# Le Notizie

A Publication of Roma Lodge #1573

May-2024

## 94th Anniversary Celebration!

Roma Lodge will be celebrating our 94th Anniversary at our May 6th meeting. As part of our celebration we will be recognizing those members who are celebrating 5-year milestone membership in the lodge. Listed below are those members who will be receiving a certificate, recognition and their picture taken at the meeting. We will be serving our traditional Italian sausage and risotto. Michael DePaoli and Joesph Goni will be in charge of cooking and we all want to thank them for taking the time to prepare a great meal for all of us.

### 5 Year Members

Richelle Chiaramonte, Camilla Pitigliano

### 10 Year Members

Anthony Chiaramonte, Pam Chiaramonte, Salvador Chiaramonte, Isabel Daramy, Leslie De Paoli, George Maness V, Isaac Pitigliano, Darian Roeber

### 15 Year Members

Gabrielle Benedetti, Gianna Benedetti, Isabella Benedetti, Garrett Costa, Lauren Costa, Aiden Gentry, Isabella Haener, Austin Moccardini, Mason Moccardini, Amie Pitigliano, Katrina Reinart, Sydney Reinart

### 20 Year Members

Aaron Curti, Grace Curti, Jaimi Curti, Chloe Cushing, Wyatt Cushing, Garren Dutto, Keegan Dutto, Julia Galvan, Gianna Haener, Henry Haener, Grace Solari

### 30 Year Members

Joey Barreto, Michael Barreto, Lucas Della, Andrew Jordan, Elizabeth Jordan

### 35 Year Members

Nicholas Curti, Joanna Moffett, Dominic Pitigliano, Michael Saltzman

### 40 Year Members

Justin Curti, Noemi Pelascini, Rick Pelascini

### 45 Year Members

Jeanette Freitas, Charles Pitigliano, Nancy Pitigliano

### 50 Year Members

Richard Atkinson, Theresa Blua, Marisa Evans, Rose Dell Frank

Sherry Reinart

### 55 Year Members

Ben Curti, Kenny Curti, Frances Della, Linda Della, Giovanna DePaoli, Dave Milanesio, Steve Milanesio, Nick Serafin, Vince Sola

### 60 Year Members

Rosalie Milanesio, Agnes Pelous

### 70 Year Members

Joann Beecher, Gary Dutto, Barbara Maraist

*If you think you have a milestone membership certificate due this year and do not see your name listed above let us know. Simply email [lar rydutto@yahoo.com](mailto:lar rydutto@yahoo.com) or text 559-901-4683 and we will make sure we get you your certificate.*



Junior Members at the 93rd Anniversary!

**May Meeting  
Monday-May 6th  
Dinner-6:00PM  
Agri-Center Social Hall  
Italian Sausage and Risotto**

# Priorities!

President's Message

**I**t's 6 a.m. on a cold February morning and you find yourself driving to the World Ag Expo. Ahead of you is a long day working the Roma Lodge food booth serving Italian sausage sandwiches to hungry World Ag Expo visitors. You may be a farmer who has work to do in the fields, have a job you are taking vacation time so you can help out at the show, or retired and after 50 years still helping at the Roma Lodge booth.

The WAE food booth is one of the major fundraisers of the year for the Roma Lodge along with our annual ravioli dinner. These two events remind the community and visitors from all over the world the importance Italian Immigrants have made to the history of our country.

Roma Lodge is a charitable, non-profit organization whose primary mission is to carryon the Italian Culture of the Tulare Community. Proceeds from our fundraiser activities are devoted to operating costs, giving charitable donations to organizations and other groups supported by our members.

I have just received the 2024 packet for the Grand Lodge Convention

to be held in Concord, California. Roma Lodge can send up to 5 delegates to the convention based on a formula, developed many years ago, when just about everyone wanted to attend the convention.

The cost of the packet is \$260 per delegate. Add hotel charges of \$170 per night and mileage of \$270 it will cost Roma Lodge about \$1,200 per delegate. Doing the math we are looking at about \$6,000 to

send 5 delegates to the convention. Whether it is an organization or as individuals we all have to make our decisions on how best to spend our financial resources.



So let's go back to my beginning example of volunteering at the farm show. You spent all day cooking onions or standing over the BBQ, stirring sauce or cooking rigatoni. You may have stood for hours helping customers or dishing out pasta or making sausage sandwiches. Then you had to walk, what seemed like miles, to the parking lot and trying to find your car and fighting the traffic to get home.

As an organization would you like to see the profit we made go toward your sons or grandsons baseball team, the Central Valley Honor Flight or the Blind Babies Foundation? Or would you like to have it spent on Coconut Macaroons at the "Italian Luau Dinner Buffet" with tickets selling for \$130 each at the convention!

This is certainly **NOT** to be a criticism of the Grand Council or the convention planners. We all know prices have increased over the years for meals, hotel rooms, mileage, etc., etc. However, we must all consider our "**return on investment**" for attending the convention.

If you look at the convention agenda you will find 36 reports being given during the business sessions of the convention. Unfortunately, these reports discuss what has happened, rather than what actions as an organization we will do in the future to increase membership, save struggling local lodges or breakout sessions to help local lodge leaders become more effective in their leadership roles.

In 1979 there were 100 lodges with over 20,000 members. Now, we have less than 4,000 members and 40 lodges. Roma Lodge members will decide at our May meeting how many delegates we plan to send to this years convention as we prioritize our finances to see if our return on investment is worth spending the \$6,000 it will cost to send 5 delegates to the convention. **We shall see!**



## Putting Your Mind At Ease!

At the April meeting we discussed the iMembersdb software to track membership. The Supreme and Grand Lodge is providing this software for free to local lodges. Financial Secretary **Tina Sparlin** and I have participated in online trainings on how to use the program. The program is used throughout the country by a variety of organizations including Lion's Clubs, Rotary and other non-profits to track membership, contact members and utilize social media to promote their organizations.

If you look at the lodge membership application the only information you have provided is name, birthdate, address and phone number. There is no mention of social security numbers, email addresses, bank accounts, or any other information one could not find in our own lodge directory. Therefore, if the information was hacked it would not provide any pertinent information about you.

For those lodges who would like can use the program to track meeting attendance, organize and communicate with committees, print directories, develop websites and do a variety of other options available for a fee. **Stay tuned!**

## So Good!

Roma Lodge is very fortunate to have a lot of younger members who step forward and take on leadership roles when necessary.

**Melissa Watkins and Nicole Taylor** are two busy moms who took time from their

schedule to organize a great meal for our members to enjoy at our April meeting. Without their support we could not practice the main tenet of our lodge which is fraternity. Next time you see them express your sincere thanks for their efforts and service to Roma Lodge.



## Death Benefit Beneficiaries

The Grand Lodge of California operates as a non-profit 501(C)(8) which is a non-profit, according to the Internal Revenue Service guidelines must offer a benefit to its members. This is why the organization offers a death benefit to its members.



When you joined Roma Lodge most of us took the death benefit and currently we pay \$15 per year for the benefit. If you meet the criteria as a Regular Member and choose to not take the death benefit, according to the Grand Lodge bylaws you are considered an Associate Member. The only difference between the rights and privileges of a Regular and an Associate Member is the death benefit.

Having said all this if you choose to drop the death benefit you must dropout of the lodge for 6-months and then can rejoin as an Associate Member. (We are still working on trying to change this)

***What is important here is that you keep your beneficiary information up-to-date.***

We just had a member who passed away who had been divorced for several years, was remarried and still had his first wife on the beneficiary form. Therefore, the proceeds from the death benefit must go to whoever is listed on the beneficiary form.

At our May meeting many of you will be celebrating milestone membership in the lodge. Currently we have over 45 members who have been in the lodge 50 or more years. ***Can you remember who you put on your beneficiary form 50+ years ago?***

You need to check with our **Financial Secretary, Tina Sparlin** at the May meeting to update any changes to your beneficiaries. If you cannot attend the May meeting you need to contact her by email [tshoofin@aol.com](mailto:tshoofin@aol.com) or by phone at 559-741-3642.

We are trying to get the Grand Lodge to allow members, who choose the death benefit, to work directly with the insurance company instead of going through the Grand Lodge. Now, the beneficiaries of our members have to contact the Financial Secretary, who contacts the Grand Lodge, who contacts the insurance company. Too confusing and cumbersome.



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### Your Roma Lodge Officers 2023-2024

President	Larry Dutto (901-4683)
Vice President	Justin Curti (906-9109)
Treasurer	Karen Pedroncelli (732-1591)
Recording Sec.	Renee Marinelli (732-8258)
Financial Sec.	Tina Sparlin (741-3642)
Orator	Anthony Chiaramonte (217-4055)
Historian	Melissa Watkins (361-0811)
Guard	Frank Marinelli (802-0611)
Past President	David DePaoli (804-5443)
Chaplain	Nicole Taylor (804-7056)
Junior Members	Pam Sola (901-1781)

### Trustees

Matt Watkins-Chair	(647-7161)
Louis Benedetti	(827-1492)
Mike Saltzman	(686-4340)
Dominic Pitigliano	(359-1907)
Michael DePaoli	(730-1168)

**Mistress of Ceremony**  
Joann Beecher (260-4156)

### Sunshine News!

**Ronnie Pedroncelli** has had health issues with a bout of pneumonia. We wish him a rapid recovery. If you know someone who is dealing with health issues contact **Joann Beecher at 559-260-4156 so she can send them a card from the lodge.**

**Next Meeting**  
**May 6, 2024**  
**6:00 PM**



**WAE-Social Hall**  
**Sausage & Risotto**

**Michael DePaoli, Joseph Goni, Dominic Pitigliano and Melissa Watkins are doing the cooking!**