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Roma Lodge #1573

# Le Notizie

A Publication of Roma Lodge #1573

August-2025

## Junior Ambassadors

Roma Lodge has the largest number of Junior Members of any lodge in the state. Two years ago our own **Louise (Bulldog) Silacci** proposed to the Grand Lodge a youth ambassador program to increase junior member participation at the local, regional and state level. The proposal fell on deaf ears.

There is an old saying, ***I guess if you want something done, you have to do it yourself!***

Do our young kids need something more to do? NO! Do junior members, and their parents have too many activities like school, sports, 4-H and FFA livestock shows, dancing, etc., etc. YES! ***So, do they need one more thing to do? Probably not!***

What they do need is more leadership activities to build their social skills, learn about our Italian Culture and more opportunities to participate in lodge activities to carry on our Italian traditions.

***Therefore, what does it take to be a Roma Lodge Junior Ambassador? First***, be a Junior Member of Roma Lodge! Second, participate in lodge meetings or activities when you can! ***That's It!***

***Pam Sola*** has done an outstanding job in preparing and conducting junior activities at our lodge meetings.

Let's carry it one step farther and give her some assistance in creating an ambassador program for our junior members.



Here is a novel idea. Let's let the junior members, who want to be Roma Lodge Junior Ambassadors, decide what they want to do for this new group within Roma Lodge. Do they want to have their own set of officers? Do they want to have a meeting in conjunction with Roma Lodge meetings? Do they want to have their own leadership activities on ZOOM calls? ***Let's let them decide!***

So why now? At the Grand Lodge convention the, charitable part of the Grand Lodge the Western Foundation gives away thousands of dollars of scholarships to deserving youth with Italian backgrounds. These youth do not have to be members of the Order. In the next 10 years Roma Lodge will have over 50 junior members who will be graduating from high school. I believe the last Roma Lodge junior member to receive a \$5,000 scholarship at the Grand Lodge convention was our queen ***Gianna Benedetti***.



Having a Roma Lodge Junior Ambassador program will enhance our junior members chances for scholarship opportunities in the future. Let's give it a try. We will discuss at our junior member back-to-school event on August 3rd.



**Junior Member  
Back-to-School Event  
Sunday  
August 3, 2025  
IAC Social Hall  
1 P.M.**

# Changing Times!

Presidents Message

I have been accused, at family gatherings, of injecting into the conversation something about Roma Lodge. On many occasions these discussions have resulted in lengthy talks about this or that dealing with the lodge meetings or activities.

At the Grand Lodge convention I was also identified as, to be polite, someone who continually questions the Grand Council on issues that need to be resolved if the organization is going to turnaround the loss of lodges and memberships.

I went back in the minutes of past conventions and during the discussion of our bylaw change to reduce annual conventions to every other year, like the national lodge, a past president remarked, ***"we have tried that in the past!"***

Life is full of changes and we all know sometimes we need to change things to adjust to changing times. Remember when we had more people going through the drive-thru at our annual ravioli dinner. We decided to change the event to drive-through only which has been very successful. We also decided to switch the venue to the IAC Social Hall which made it easier to get people through the drive through.

Remember how many years we did the dinner the day before Mother's Day. It was always difficult for our moms who worked so hard at the dinner and there was always a lot of discussion on Mother's Day about the dinner.

We also remember when we had our Columbus Day celebration at Mooney's Grove. The general public had no idea, as Italians, we were doing anything to commemorate Columbus. We decided to Make Columbus Great Again by hosting our ravioli dinner during Columbus Day weekend making the community aware of Roma Lodge.



Now, we have decided to move our Junior Member back-to-school event to Sunday, August 3rd. These events have been special as we all enjoy a summer BBQ, the meeting is conducted by the juniors and everyone has a great time.

Unfortunately, when we did these events at our regular meeting on a Monday night it was difficult for juniors who had already started schools, our teachers who were preparing for the start of school to attend. We always felt rushed to get families in and out during school days.

Having the event on Sunday also gives those families who live outside of the Tulare area the ability to travel on a Sunday and not worry about attending after school or work so we hope this helps. Again, changing long held traditions to accommodate changing times.

We have also changed the way we handle our back-to-school items by asking parents what ages and grades their junior members are so we can target what items they may need for school. There are a lot of teachers in our lodge and they know what kids need for school.

We have emailed a Google Form to parents asking for their input into the specific ages, grades and other information so we can target the right things for the right kids. The Junior Member program was started about 15 years ago and it has been instrumental in keeping our junior members engaged in lodge activities.

***They are our future. Without them we will not have a lodge someday!***





## Bocce Time!

It has been two years since we presented the prized Bocce Champions trophy to a winning team. Other than great Italian food we Italians love playing bocce ball. We need to have someone in the lodge step forward to chair a bocce tournament and pick a day and site for our tournament. It can be a lot of fun for the whole family so let's start a new tradition and get started.



## Ravioli Dinner Drive-Thru

Last year we moved our ravioli dinner drive-thru to **Columbus Day** weekend. The corresponding date this year will be **Saturday, October 11th**. We will need to start thinking about getting everything lined up for our dinner this year.

**You may be thinking to yourself that it is only July and October is a long way off.** Just think of all the parents already thinking of school starting in just a few weeks. We won't have another meeting until September 8th because of Labor Day and that will only be a few weeks before the dinner. We have a lot to do so we need to start planning.



## Lodge Directory

Thanks to our Financial Secretary, Giovanna DePaoli, our membership roster has been updated and we will be publishing our Lodge Directory which we will have ready for our September meeting. If you have a change in your address, or phone number please let us know at the August meeting so we can update our directory before printing. If you are not going to be at the August meeting, email her at [gdepaoli@ocsnet.net](mailto:gdepaoli@ocsnet.net) and let her know of any changes.



## Bylaw Changes

It seems a bit ironic that you have to go to Article 67, in the Grand Lodge Bylaws, to determine membership classifications in the Order. In brief, members are classified as **Regular, Associate, Social, At-Large, Meritorious, Honorary and Junior**. For an organization that has been losing membership and lodges over the past numerous years it is time we stopped putting our members into boxes and discriminating against those who may not be of Italian descent, choose the death benefit or of a certain age when they join.

Our country has gone through a period of DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) and yet we see the Order do the exact opposite when it comes to dividing our membership into different categories. We must remember the tenets of the Order are **LIBERTY-EQUALITY-FRATERNITY**. We need to change Article 67 to combine Regular, Associate and Social into one classification. **REGULAR** members.

Roma Lodge was founded 95 years ago with its primary mission of getting Italian Immigrants to become American Citizens. That mission has changed to one of carrying on the Italian Culture. You don't have to be Italian to want to do that. You may have friends who are Italian, enjoy Italian food, like to volunteer at Roma Lodge fundraising activities like the WAE food booth or ravioli dinner drive-thru or just have fun. If you want to join Roma Lodge you should be a Regular member. **PERIOD!**

With your support we will propose this bylaw change for next years convention.

## ZOOM Meetings!

Grand Lodge president Mark Vaona and VP's Mark Rossi and Tina Sparlin will be hosting monthly Zoom call meetings for input from local lodges. They will be the last Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. If you would like to participate. Let me know.

## Sunshine News!

**Charlie Pitigliano, Lorraine Cleek and Vince Sola** continue to have health issues. If you know someone who is sick, had an accident or recent surgery, contact **Joann Beecher at 559-260-4156 so she can send them a card from the lodge.**



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## Your Roma Lodge Officers 2025-2026

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### Mistress of Ceremony

Joann Beecher (688-8380)

## Junior Member Meeting Sunday, August 3rd 1 p.m.



**Dutto-Cleek-Luis-Gentry  
Lunch Hosts**