



# Le Notizie

A Publication of Roma Lodge #1573

February-2026

## WORLD AG EXPO\*

**Michael DePaoli, Melissa Watkins and Maci Daramy** have been gearing up for the upcoming World Ag Expo February 10-12th!

We will be having our February meeting on **Sunday, February 8th. Those wanting to help with making sauce we will begin at 7 a.m.** Cutting onions at **9 a.m.** with our February meeting at **10 a.m.** and lunch afterwards. If you plan to assist at the farm show this year you will need to come on Sunday to get your daily passes.

Well, now is your chance. If you can't help during the show you can still support our booth in one of two ways. First, you can become a sponsor of Roma Lodge by donating \$100 or more to the lodge. We will proudly display your name or business on a sign at the booth.

Second, if you have a business or would just like to treat your friends to a great meal you can purchase Roma Lodge chits for \$15 each. Simply contact **Melissa Watkins at 559-361-0811** before the start of the show and she will give you the number of coupons you would like. You can give these chits to your employees,



Hopefully, you will be allowed to enter through **Gate 6** and tell them you are attending the Roma Lodge meeting without having a pass.

If you cannot attend on the 8th you need to contact **Melissa Watkins @ 559-361-0811 to get your pass.**

We want to encourage everyone who can attend the show to come to the booth and help in whatever capacity you can. For the past 58-years Roma Lodge has had a booth at the show. Of all the activities we do each year the farm show allows us to showcase our organization and promote the Italian Culture to the community and to our world visitors.

There are a lot of members who because of age, health, work schedule or other responsibilities during the WAE can't help out during the show.

customers or friends. All you have to do is put your information on a label and attach it on the back of the card and we will honor your request. We will contact you after the show and let you know how many coupons were used and what your donation is. These two options are a great way to support Roma Lodge in their fundraising efforts.

**February Meeting**  
**Sunday-February 8th**  
**WAE Food Booth**  
**We will make sauce at 7 AM**  
**Cut Onions-9 AM-Bring Your Knife/Cutting Board**  
**Meeting at 10 AM -Followed by Lunch**  
**Enter Gate #6-Hope to see you there!**

# Will You Be In The Picture!

Presidents Message

**Vince and Pam Sola** were the Roma Lodge farm show food booth chairs in 2003. A mere 22 years ago!

Back in 2007 **Ken Curti, Kathy Briano and Ben Curti**

served as chairs for the show.



Roma Lodge has had a booth at the World Ag Expo since 1968. We have hundreds of members who have given of their time and resources to operate the booth each year.



In 2011 **Josh Pitigliano** was our show chair.



With over 100,000 visitors each year and 80 countries represented Roma Lodge has showcased our Italian Culture for over 57 years. I don't know if any other non-profit organization in Tulare County has such a long history of serving guests at the World Ag Expo.

These events for any non-profit do not come without the dedication of its members to step forward and do the work before, during and after the show. Just like the success of the World Ag Expo and International Agri-Center would not have been possible without the time and efforts of nearly 1,500 volunteers.



Since 2011 **Michael DePaoli, Maci Daramy and Melissa Watkins** have been chairs for the food booth. Roma Lodge owes this members a great

deal of thanks and appreciation for taking on this major fundraiser, developing new menu items and working with lodge members to make a great event showcasing our Italian Culture. This activity takes a lot of preparation and cleanup after the show and they need all of our support in making the show a success each year.



If you are a member of Roma Lodge we would appreciate your participation, in whatever capacity, you can to support our food booth. If you have a few hours during the show to come down and serve customers or cook please do so. If you have a junior member who can help before or during the show please have them come down a participate. **Will you be in the picture of the 2026 Roma Lodge food booth? We hope so!**

## **Gary Stephen Giraudi**

**July 19, 1942-December 12, 2025**

Gary Giraudi was a 52 year member of Roma Lodge #1573. Born in Porterville, he was a lifelong resident of the area. He was an educator and in 2004, he was honored by the



city and Chamber as "Man of the Year". Gary and wife Karlin, who passed away in March of 2025, always enjoyed attending the annual ravioli dinner. Several Roma Lodge members attended Gary's services on January 6th to give our final tribute to Gary. *Farewell Brother Gary Giraudi. May you rest in peace.*



## **Paying Your Dues for 2026!**

Roma Lodge dues were due starting January 1, 2026. At the January meeting the lodge members voted to keep our dues at \$85 per year.

You must pay your dues by the end of the first quarter or else Roma Lodge will be forced to drop you from our membership roster. Make your check to Roma Lodge. Checks only. No cash. **Mail them to Roma Lodge, PO Box 1337, Tulare, California, 93275. You may also bring them to the February 8th at the farm show booth meeting or to the March meeting. If you do not pay your dues by the end of the first quarter you will be dropped. If you have questions contact financial secretary Giovanna DePaoli at 559-361-0640.**

## **Tickets for the Farm Show!**

We need everyone's help at the WAE food booth this year. If you can help in the booth please do so. You can pickup your pass for the show at the February meeting. For those who cannot attend the February meeting on **Sunday, February 8th at 10 a.m.** you can contact Melissa Watkins at **559-361-0811** to make arrangements to get your pass before the show.

## **Sunshine News!**

Roma Lodge junior member **Quinn Moffett** was seriously injured the day after Christmas. He was originally airlifted to Valley Children's Hospital and then to Stanford.

While at Stanford he had 7 surgeries and 5 blood transfusions during his three week stay. He has a long road to a full recovery and we wish him all the best. 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.**



## **Roma Lodge Scholarships**

**Kylene Filiponi** was the Roma Lodge Scholarship recipient in 2022. She has just graduated from **Oklahoma State University** and majored in Animal Science. **Congratulations to Kylene.**

At the January 2025 meeting lodge members voted to have both lodge member and Merit Scholarships this year. Merit Scholarships will be available to Tulare County high school graduates. Lodge scholarships will be in the amount of \$1,000 and Merit scholarships are for \$500.

Applications for the 2025 Roma Lodge Scholarships are available on the Roma Lodge website. You can also contact **Melissa Watkins by email at [mdepaoliwat@gmail.com](mailto:mdepaoliwat@gmail.com) or calling 559-361-0811.**

**Roma Lodge scholarship applications will be due on March 1, 2026.**





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**Your Roma Lodge Officers  
2025-2026**

President	Larry Dutto (901-4683)
Vice President	Justin Curti-(906-9109)
Treasurer	Karen Pedroncelli (732-1591)
Recording Sec.	Renee Marinelli (732-8258)
Financial Sec.	Giovanna DePaoli (361-0640)
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)

**Trustees**

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

**Mistress of Ceremony**  
Joann Beecher (688-8380)

**Our lunch hosts for our farm show sauce making and onion cutting will be Karen DeGroot and Joyce Hofstee. They always provide wonderful meals for our members. We want to thank them for their great effort!**

