



The CCI Corriere

CENTRO CULTURALE ITALIANO DI BUFFALO MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Welcome CCI Operations Team!

The CCI Buffalo Board of Directors is excited to announce the development of its first ever operations team. At the start of 2021, the board first appointed John A. Vecchio as the center's new Executive Director. Following John's appointment, he worked to develop an impressive team of employees. In February of 2021, the CCI hired Lindsey Lauren Visser as its Deputy Director, Dan Vecchio as the Operations and Facilities Manager, and Morgan Foss as the Marketing and Promotions Coordinator.

John A. Vecchio is an experienced fundraiser and communicator, and he currently serves as the President of Vecchio & Associates, LLC. As Executive Director, John works directly with the CCI Board of Directors, staff, donors, and community partners.

Lindsey Lauren Visser is a passionate and accomplished historian and researcher with extensive experience in the museum and cultural industries. In her role as Deputy Director, Lindsey is responsible for the development of programming, fundraising, community partnerships and membership management.

Dan Vecchio joined the CCI team as the Operations and Facilities Manager. In his role, Dan oversees property maintenance, assists with grant writing, and provides innovative programming and fundraising ideas. Dan is also a notable writer at Vecchio & Associates, LLC.

Morgan Foss is a recent graduate from Syracuse University, where she earned her master's degree in public relations. As the Marketing and Promotions Coordinator, Morgan develops and implements marketing and social media strategy to engage with members and the Buffalo Community.

The CCI also celebrates Toni Marie Di Leo's 9 year affiliation with the organization. Since the CCI was founded in 2012, Toni Marie has served as a board member, Executive Director and as the Director of Education and Membership.



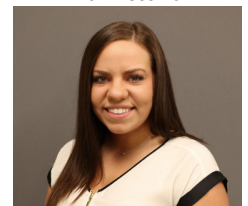
John A. Vecchio



Lindsey Lauren Visser



Dan Vecchio



Morgan Foss



Toni Marie Di Leo

Announcements

CCI OPERATIONS TEAM
PAGE 1

TONI MARIE'S BULLETIN
PAGE 2

CCI MEDIA MOVES
PAGE 2

DR. GIACOBBE'S 88TH
PAGE 2

BUILDING UPDATES
PAGE 3

EXCITING VISITORS
PAGE 4

THE TONY DIINA LEGACY
PAGE 5

DONOR SPOTLIGHT
PAGE 6

LOOKING FORWARD
PAGE 6

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Toni Marie's Bulletin

Membership Renewals

- Near the end of March, the CCI mailed out membership renewal letters for 2021. The letter also introduced the new membership program and benefits for the upcoming year of 2022. New member levels and prices will be announced as 2022 approaches.
- Membership Benefits now include:
 - Discounts on language classes, free or discounted admission to programs and events, 10% discount on gift shop purchases, discount on café purchases, CCI e-newsletters, reciprocity program with Italian owned businesses, and free admission to lectures and new exhibits.
- Currently, the CCI has over **417 active** members, and **71 lifetime** members!
- To sign-up for a CCI membership, please visit: <https://ccibuffalo.org/membership/>

Virtual Language Lessons

- CCI's Summer session of Italian language lessons are currently in full swing!
- Beginner, advanced beginner, intermediate and conversational classes were offered to members and non-members.
- Classes began May 5th and will continue on for 12-weeks.
- There are **16 language students** enrolled in this session, including individuals from **Texas** and **New Jersey**!
- In September we will be offering our first-ever Sicilian Language class along with our regular Italian classes! If you're interested in the class, please contact afconiglio@aol.com

CCI Media Moves

Membership Survey

- On March 28th, the CCI distributed an online membership survey via member's emails, and CCI's Facebook and Instagram.
- The survey was designed to understand how the CCI can best communicate programming and membership benefits to both current and future members.
- Survey Findings:
 - *125 respondents, 85 members & 40 non-members.*
 - Top five selected programs were: *Language lessons, cooking classes, lectures, movie nights and concerts.*
 - Top three preferred program communication methods were: *e-Newsletter (email), social media posts, and referral from a member.*

Traveling with Theresa

- The CCI is happy to continue to share Theresa Potenza's passion and knowledge through virtual tours of Italy. Theresa is a Buffalo native and licensed Rome tour guide.
- Last month, Theresa shared a virtual tour of the Pantheon, Rome's most impressive monument.
- Past videos include virtual tours to Puglia, Naples, Tiber Island, The Amalfi Coast & more!
- To watch Theresa's tours, check out our Facebook page, or visit and subscribe to CCI Buffalo's YouTube channel.

Happy 88th Birthday Dr. Giacobbe!

On April 3rd, 2021, CCI founder and President, Dr. Francesco Giacobbe, turned 88 years old.

Dr. Giacobbe likes telling the story of his birth date, April 3rd, 1933, noting how his father was so excited about the birth of his son, he forgot to register the birth until April 4th due to all of his celebrating!

Therefore Dr. Giacobbe celebrates his birthday on both April 3rd and April 4th! Happy Birthday, Doctor!





2351 Delaware Avenue Renovations

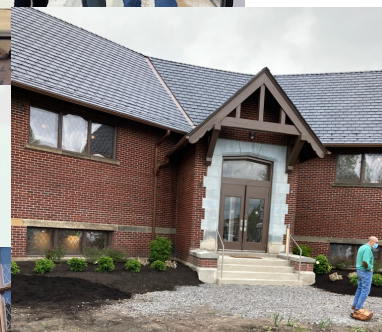
Since the beginning of the new year, the new CCI Buffalo site has made significant progress! We're excited to share our most recent renovations on the inside and outside of 2351 Delaware Avenue!

Inside the Site

- The kitchen equipment was delivered and installed in early March. The kitchen features a full range stove, double refrigerator, sinks, deep fryer, prep area and pantry. According to the membership survey, the CCI community is highly interested in celebrity chef nights and cooking classes!
- Installation of the Espresso Bar began on May 18th. The Espresso Bar will offer coffee, cappuccino and pasties from Romeo and Juliet's. Espresso, coffee and treats will be served on custom Italian ceramics, gifted by Maria Foss in memory of her mother, Jean Renzi McCarthy.
- The custom reception desk, gifted by Michael Giallombardo, was delivered in early April.
- The original book above the fireplace in "The Donna Fiorella Fireplace Room" will be refinished and painted by a notable Buffalo artist, Melina Scime.
- "The Michael J. LoCurto Gift Shop" has begun gathering inventory, including authentic items from Italy and other Italian pride pieces. The gift shop committee is chaired by Luciana Galante.
- The CCI is pleased to have custom historic doors specifically crafted, painted and installed at the site.
- We also had a recent visit by Joe Lanzi of the Burchfield Penny museum, who offered his expert advice for running a successful gift shop!

Building & Grounds

- The property's landscaping, commissioned by Russ Salvatore, is beginning to take shape and add beauty to our new center. The courtyard was cleared and leveled, and the shrubs and plant beds are now in place. Our courtyard will also feature an herb garden near the bocce court!
- The CCI Operations team had the new site's interior all spruced up for the visit of Francesco Lagutaine, M&T Bank's Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, back in April!





Visitor Spotlight



Francesco Lagutaine, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer at M&T Bank visited the center.

(Left-Right: John A. Vecchio, Lindsey Lauren Visser, Julietta Klein, Dr. Giacobbe, Francesco and Marianne Lagutaine, Mario Giacobbe, Rocco Termini)



Frey Electric President Salvatore Sciandra visited the site on May 12th. Frey Electric and team are working on the final touches to CCI's new home.

(Left-Right: Sal Sciandra, Rich Cansola, Lindsey Lauren Visser, Russ Salvatore, Dr. Francesco Giacobbe)

CCI Board Member, Wayne Bacon visited the site on May 5th along with his wife, Mary Bacon, three sisters and son.



Senator Timothy M. Kennedy and Councilmen, Joel P. Feroletto toured the site on April 29th.

(Left-Right: Joel P. Feroletto, Rocco Termini, Joseph A. Fiorella, Timothy M. Kennedy, Mario Giacobbe)





Remembering Anthony Diina

From the Desk of John A. Vecchio



July 8, 1947 - April 20, 2021

The Tony Diina Legacy

The CCI lost a beloved friend with the recent passing of Anthony "Tony" Diina. As our Capital Campaign Vice-Chair, Tony was a fiercely devoted advocate of our Italian Cultural Center.

The Hon. Anthony Masiello, Campaign Chair, reflected on his sudden passing by saying "**The loss of Tony Diina is painful and staggering for all of us who knew him. His passion, his intellect and love for CCI gave us the early foundation for the tremendous success that our organization is now experiencing.**"

In recognition of Tony's deep commitment to the concept of Planned Giving, I am proud to announce the Anthony N. Diina Legacy Society memorializing Tony's lasting support to our mission.

Legacy gifts enable individuals to create a powerful philanthropic impact on the causes important to them. Tony was an enthusiastic advocate of planned giving. But the best part was that Tony practiced what he preached. He made our campaign's very first bequest, and for that we will be ever grateful.

John A. Vecchio
Executive Director

Donor Spotlight

The CCI organization is delighted to recognize the recent generosity of some of our friends and community members. We are very grateful for their contributions!

- Frank Todaro, Erie County Legislator and owner of Master's Collision, visited the site with his son, John
- MaryGrace Corsi Welch, Lead Economic Development Representative at National Grid
- Patricia Evans, current CCI member who pledged a donation when she visited the site in March.
- James Spano, President of Buffalo Office Supply
- James DiFiglia, donated artist proof lithographs



Frank Todaro and his son John Todaro.



James Spano, Lindsey Lauren Visser and Dr. Giacobbe



CCI Member Patricia Evans and Dr. Giacobbe



James DiFiglia

Stay Tuned!

- In the upcoming week, CCI is going to begin its Paver Project fundraiser. We will be selling 4x4 and 8x8 pavers to be placed near our entrance and walkway to the bocce court.
- The **"La Festa at Tappo"** will be held on June 26th at 166 Chandler Street at 6:00pm. Tickets are on sale for \$60, and must be purchased by June 23rd.
- Follow us on social media for weekly posts about programs, fundraisers, video tours, opening dates and more.
- Email newsletter editor, Morgan Foss, to highlight a CCI Member or interesting story in the next issue!



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