

Embassy of Italy Review

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An Outdoor View of Villa Firenze on the Evening of the Opera Ball.



The Embassy of Italy in Washington DC

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Foreword by the Ambassador

Embassy of Italy Review represents an opportunity to illustrate the events which stemmed from the cultural, social, political, and economic activities of the Embassy of Italy in Washington, DC during 2006.

Together with my staff, we decided to share with the virtual readers of the Newsletter of the Embassy of Italy in Washington, the most important moments, the most official, but also the most moving and the most amusing, which have taken place in the ideal "piazza" (town square) represented by the splendid atrium built by architect Sartogo.

The atrium is like the typical Italian "piazza" where people discuss culture, politics, sports, and the economy; it is where they meet friends and celebrate special occasions: this is the spirit which animated our work throughout this year and this is what the newsletter wants to portray.

Embassy of Italy Review will be issued on a quarterly basis and it will be the images, more than the words, to narrate the events which see Italy as the central character through the Embassy's "piazza".

Gianni Castellaneta

International Prayer for Peace April 26th 2006



Leaders of some of the most important religious groups walking from Georgetown...

...to the Embassy of Italy.



On April 26th 2006 the international day of prayer for peace was held.

It was organized by Georgetown University and Comunità di Sant'Egidio to promote a constructive dialogue between different cultures and religions.

The most important religious leaders paraded together through the streets of Georgetown: Christians, Orthodox, Muslims, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhists, Shintoists, Sikhs...testified that there can be and there must be understanding among different religions in order to create a positive dialogue.

The leaders finally made their way to the Embassy of Italy where they had been invited by His Excellency Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta for a buffet dinner.

Urbino Press Award



March 13th, the announcement of the prize ceremony hosted by the Embassy of Italy in Washington, DC at the presence of the Italian Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Giovanni Castellaneta.

The "Urbino Press Award" is the recognition of excellence in journalism awarded to American reporters who, through their commitment and daily work, conscientiously inform millions of people.

In the year 2006, the award was given to Diane Rehm, journalist and host of the NPR talk show.

The ceremony for the announcement of the award took place at the Embassy of Italy in Washington DC on March 13th, 2006.

The journalist after thanking the Embassy for its hospitality, set a new rendezvous in Urbino for the award ceremony itself.



May 11th, The first Urbino Press Award, to be given to NPR Talk show host and journalist Diane Rehm.



Diane Rehm thanks the organization for the prize and the Embassy of Italy for the hospitality.



Deputy Chief of Mission Minister Stefano Stefanini giving welcome remarks at the ceremony

A Taste of Italy for U.S. Wounded Veterans Ambassador Opens Embassy Doors to Wounded Veterans from Walter Reed Military Hospital.



The Embassy of Italy in Washington, D.C., set up for the American Wounded Veterans Dinner on Friday, May 19, 2006



A view of the dinner

On the 19th of May 2006, His Excellency, Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta welcomed to the Embassy of Italy injured war veterans and their families.

In the warm and hospitable atrium of the Embassy, twenty seven young veterans, recently returned from their tour of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, and still being treated at various area hospitals, joined Ambassador Castellaneta and his wife Lila for dinner.

Greeted by the entire diplomatic staff and by the highest Italian military officers, the guests spent a pleasant and amusing evening while enjoying the well-known Italian hospitality and its exquisite cuisine.

"A small gesture, a chance to share good food and a profound and sincere friendship", with these words the Ambassador welcomed his guests.

The event, also attended by Gen. Pasquale Preziosa, Italian Defense Attaché, and by First Counselor Luca Ferrari, was accompanied by the performance of tenor Antonio Giuliano.



Ambassador and Mrs. Castellaneta talk with Sgt. Neil Duncan, right, of Minneapolis, Minn., and Spec. Rob Lliteras of Tampa, Fla., after dinner.

The Quartet of LA SCALA of Milan in Concert

at the Embassy of Italy on the Occasion
of the "Italian National Day",
June 2, 2006.

On the occasion of Italy's National Day, the string quartet of the prestigious "La Scala" of Milan held a concert in the Embassy of Italy Auditorium at the presence of His Excellency, Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta and his wife Lila, as well as many Foreign Ambassadors to Washington.

The Ambassador, thanking the guests for coming, explained the meaning of Italy's National Day for the Italian people and offered a buffet dinner for the guests prepared by Villa Firenze's chef and his staff. Tenor Antonio Giuliano performed during the dinner.



Ambassador Castellaneta with wife Lila during the performance, which took place in the Embassy's auditorium.



The Ambassador's Speech during the
Italian National Day, June 2, 2006.

Opera Ball 2006, June 9 at Villa Firenze

Italian Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta and his wife Lila hosted the Washington National Opera's 48th annual Opera Ball with "A Venetian Ball at Villa Firenze", chaired by Betty Knight Scripps. It was truly one of the most spectacular fêtes of the year. Guests were welcomed at Villa Firenze by a candle lit drive and servants dressed in ivory brocade and powdered wigs, and enjoyed a dessert buffet with a chocolate fantasy table and crema frita alla Veneziana. The theme of Venice at twilight continued on the outdoor terrace with dancing late into the evening to New York's Bob Hardwick and Orchestra. Although the Italians took the cake (tiramisu) by sponsoring the ball and hosting all 550 guests, 26 other ambassadors from Belgium, Spain, Egypt and more pitched in by hosting elegant pre-Ball dinner parties at their respective residences.



Italian Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta with his wife Lila.

At the podium Opera Ball's Chairman of John Pohanka, to his right the Ambassador of Italy and his wife, to his left in the red dress General Chairman of the Opera Ball Betty Shrips.



The guest list included Justices Anthony Kennedy, Ruth Bader Ginsberg and her husband Martin Ginsburg, and Antonin Scalia; Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez and wife Edilia; Sen. Robert Bennett and wife Joyce; Hon. Stuart Bernstein and wife Wilma; Arturo and Hilda Brillembourg; Brazilian Amb. Roberto Abdenur and wife Maria; Under Secretary Paula Dobriansky; Indian Amb. Ronen Sen and wife Kalpana; and Assistant Secretary of State Dina Powell amongst others.



An enchanting decor set the mood



Justice Scalia and his wife Maureen



Rick and Dina Powell



A not so serious opera moment



An outdoor view of Firenze House on the evening of the event

A look at the astonishing Italian patisserie



The Ambassador's wife Lila hosted the evening



The best Italian chocolate chefs have to offer



A toast to the opera ball

2006 Celebration of Friendship by the American Jewish Committee,

June 15, 2006

On June 15 at the Embassy of Italy in Washington the Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee, David Harris, presented the 2006 'Celebration of Friendship' award to Italy's Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Giovanni Castellaneta.

During the same ceremony the AJC centenary was also celebrated and Thomas Khan, president of the Washington Chapter, gave a speech thanking the Italian Government and the Italian people for the solidarity shown the Jewish Communities throughout the world.



The award presented to Italy's Ambassador in the US, H.E. Giovanni Castellaneta.



Italy's Ambassador in the US, H.E. Giovanni Castellaneta speaking at the celebration.

June 17th, World Soccer Championship Qualifying Match - Germany 2006



On June 17th, in the Atrium of the Embassy of Italy in Washington, DC, live from Kaiserslautern (Germany), the Italy-USA second round E group qualifying match for the World Cup was shown on a giant screen.

The Italian player Gilardino scored a goal at the 22', but at the 26' Zaccardo's autogoal and the subsequent expulsion of De Rossi left the final result a "diplomatic" 1-1 tie.

Some of Tiziano's and Bellini's Most Famous Paintings Displayed at the National Gallery of Art for the "Bellini, Giorgione, Tiziano and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting" Exhibition, June 18 - September 17, 2006

"Bellini, Giorgione, Titian and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting" is the latest large international exhibition organized by the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC. Premiering June 18th and extending through September 17th at the National Gallery of Art, the exhibition explores the relationships between these and other artists, emphasizes the innovative treatments of new pictorial themes such as the pastoral landscape, and reveals what modern conservation science has discovered about the Venetian painters' techniques.

The exhibition has been organized by the National Gallery of Art and by the Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna, which owns some of the most important Renaissance art collections, and is supported by the contribution of the Federal Council for the Arts and the Humanities. Among the masterpieces is Titian's "Concert Champêtre" (c. 1510) part of the Louvre collection which, for the first time, has been given hospitality in the United States, in addition to other very important artworks that came from the National Gallery in London, the Prado Museum in Madrid, the Galleria of the Uffizi in Florence and from numerous other museums and private collections. "I am very pleased and proud to be able to offer the cooperation of the Embassy of Italy in Washington for the set up of this extraordinary exhibit," was Ambassador Castellaneta's comment at the event. The Ambassador also thanked the National Gallery of Art which, "together with the Bracco group, has made it possible to put together an event that captures in all its artistic glory such a fervent period in our cultural history."

"This exhibition brings the Renaissance alive not only as an era in history, but also as a concept embraced by the most adventurous artists of their time," said Earl A. Powell III, director of the National Gallery of Art.



The Feast of the Gods, Bellini-Tiziano,
oil on canvas 1514, 1529



Concert Champêtre Tiziano,
oil on canvas 1510

Venetian Masters: Opening, Luncheon and Dinner on the Occasion of the Inauguration of the "Bellini, Giorgione, Tiziano and the Renaissance of Venetian Painting" Exhibition on June 14 at Villa Firenze



Lila Castellaneta and Laura Bush at Villa Firenze, Residence of the Italian Ambassador.

June 14th, Luncheon and Dinner hosted at Villa Firenze by Italian Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta and his wife Lila with the National Gallery of Art in honor of the opening of the "Bellini, Giorgione, Tiziano and the Renaissance of Italian Painting" exhibition at the National Gallery of Art.

Italian Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta and his wife Lila hosted the first few of a series of events to celebrate the opening of the Venetian Masters exhibit at the National Gallery, highlighting the works of Bellini, Giorgione and Titian. The series of celebrations began with a cozy reception for major donors at the residence of Italian Ambassador Giovanni Castellaneta. The next morning, First Lady Laura Bush visited the exhibition accompanied by Gallery Director Rusty Powell, Lila Castellaneta and Diana Bracco, chairman and CEO of Bracco Group, which sponsored the exhibit.

Mrs. Castellaneta also hosted a lunch with the First Lady as the guest of honor at Villa Firenze. Gallery trustees hosted a special black-tie reception and preview that evening for special guests, including the Russian Ambassador Yuri Ushakov and his wife Svetlana; Justices Samuel Alito, Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg; Senators John Warner and Patrick Leahy; Chief of Protocol Donald Ensenat and Lucio Caputo, president of the Italian Wine and Food Institute.



Armando Varricchio, Head of Economic and Scientific Affairs, Ambassador Castellaneta and First Counselor Luca Ferrari.

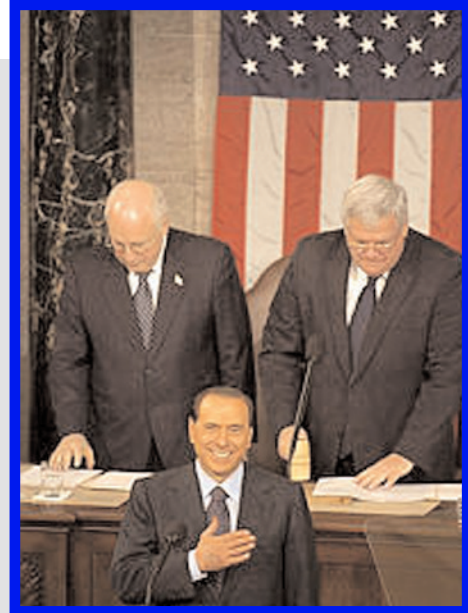


Justice Antonin Scalia and his wife Maureen.

Former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi addresses US Congress, visits Washington DC

March 1st 2006

March 1st 2006, P.M. Berlusconi addresses a Joint Sessions of Congress, behind him Vice President Cheney, in his quality of President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives Dennis Hastert.



Visit to Washington by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Massimo D'Alema

June 16th 2006



Massimo D'Alema and Condoleezza Rice at the Department of State during their joint press conference.

New Italian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Massimo D'Alema paid his first visit to Washington DC upon Invitation by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.



Massimo D'Alema and Condoleezza Rice during the press conference, I in the background Ambassadors Castellaneta and Spogli (U.S. Ambassadors to Italy).

T.H. Clemente Mastella, the Italian Minister of Justice, visits Washington DC

October 23rd



The Italian Minister of Justice and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice



Secretary of Justice Alberto R. Gonzales and Clemente Mastella, the Italian Minister of Justice.



The Italian Minister of Justice during the press conference, at his right SE Ambassador Castellaneta.

Italian Minister of the Interior, Giuliano Amato, visits Washington DC

November 1th 2006



The Minister of the Interior of Italy, Giuliano Amato

Minister Amato held talks in Washington with Homeland Security Secretary, Michael Chertoff, with Attorney General, Alberto Gonzales, and with the Director of National Intelligence, Ambassador John Negroponte.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Cultural Heritage visits Washington DC

November 28th 2006



Vice President Dick Cheney and Fancesco Rutelli during their cmeeting at the White House.



President of World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz met at the World Bank to discuss development and cultural diplomacy.

Giovanni De Gennaro, chief of the Italian National Police awarded the FBI Medal for Meritorious Achievement

Washington DC, November 8th 2006

At a ceremony at FBI Headquarters on December 8th, 2006, FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III, presented Prefetto Giovanni De Gennaro, Chief of the Italian National Police ("INP") the FBI Medal for Meritorious Achievement, recognizing the legendary Italian law enforcement leader for his pioneering efforts in international police cooperation.

FBI Director Mueller said, "Under Prefetto De Gennaro's leadership, Italy and the United States achieved unprecedented levels of cooperation in the fight against organized crime," said FBI Director Mueller. "Throughout his law enforcement career, Prefetto De Gennaro has shown great courage in the face of unrelenting danger and been a champion of the cause of justice. His efforts have directly contributed to our success in combating the threat of organized crime."

Joining Mueller in the ceremony were Louis J. Freeh, Former FBI Director; Antonin Scalia, Supreme Court Justice; Frances Fragos-Townsend, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security-Terrorism-White House; Giovanni Castellaneta, Italian Ambassador to the U.S.; Melvin Sembler, Former US Ambassador to Italy; Paul J. McNulty, Deputy Attorney General; James Comey, Former Deputy Attorney General; Alice Fisher, Chief, Department of Justice-Criminal Division; Eugene R. Sullivan, Federal Judge; Roslynn R. Mauskopf, U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of New York; Joseph Guccione, U.S. Marshall; and, Thomas Pickard, Former FBI Acting Director. The event was co-hosted by John S. Pistole, FBI Deputy Director.



Giovanni De Gennaro, chief of the Italian National Police.

The FBI Medal for Meritorious Achievement is usually given to FBI personnel who have demonstrated extraordinary actions in times of extreme challenge - and often in the face of grave danger. It is also awarded for exceptional achievements in connection with criminal or national security cases. For the first time this year the Medal of Meritorious Achievement has been awarded to one of our international partners.

Tommaso Padoa Schioppa Italian Minister of the Economy and Finance visits Washington DC

November 1st 2006

During his visit the Minister met Henry Paulson the Treasury Secretary, Ben Bernanke, Federal Reserve Chairman, Paul Wolfowitz President of the World Bank, and Rodrigo de Rato, Managing Director of the IMF.



Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, Italian Minister of Economy and Finance.

Panamerican 20.000

Ambassador Castellaneta, Counselor Cecilia Piccioni and First Counselor Giuseppe Perrone posing in front of a classic Ferrari.



On the 8th of November 2006 the Embassy of Italy held the Ferrari Panamerican 20.000 event.

Washington has been a very important stop for the latest Ferrari 599 GTB 'Fiorano' that has traveled 32.000 Km throughout the United States. After having been in 14 countries (Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Canada) the new-born Ferrari went on to Chicago, Toronto to finish its trip in New York.



Lila Castellaneta with the new Ferrari 599 GTB "Fiorano"

This event was conceived in order to promote the new Maranello car underlining his quality and reliability in the Usa, Ferrari's he first worldwide market. There were about 250 people in attendance, among them, Congressmen, Italian companies' CEOs, Ferrari collectors, as well as officials from the Embassy. During the event, Ferrari North America President Maurizio Parlatto also presented a prestigious vintage Ferrari.

Paolo de Castro Minister of Agriculture Food and Forestry Policies visits Washington DC

December 12nd 2006



The Italian Minister of Agriculture, Paolo De Castro, was in Washington on December 12. He met United States Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, and US Trade Representative's Chief Agricultural Negotiator, Richard T. Crowder, to discuss questions related to the access of Italian food products to the US market, issues related to the counterfeiting of Made in Italy products, and trade barriers on goods imported into the United States.

Paolo de Castro Minister of Agriculture
Food and Forestry Policies.