

## L'Italo Americano's 100 Years of Service

Dom Serafini (March 06, 2008)



America's oldest Italian newspaper celebrates its first century

Recently, L'ItaloAmericano celebrated its 100 years with a Hollywood-style party at the Sheraton Hotel in Hollywood, right next to NBC-Universal studios.

The weekly, published in Los Angeles in both English and Italian, serves all of California, parts of Nevada and Oregon and reaches to Vancouver, Canada. L'ItaloAmericano is the oldest Italian newspaper in existence today in the U.S.

Among the 320 participants at the celebration were new Italian Council General to Los Angeles, Nicola Faganello, and Noema Corradi, president of Abruzzesi and Molisani of California Association,

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and Italian guests from Toronto and New York, in addition to those from closer cities such as San Diego, San Francisco and San Jose.

A great surprise was the presence of an incredibly fit and festive Gennaro De Rubertis, from the Molise Region, who was also celebrating his 100 years.

L'ItaloAmericano was founded in 1908 by the Florentine Gabriello Spini, as a competitor for L'Eco della Colonia, a newspaper that Spini co-founded in 1894 in Los Angeles.

However, it was Spini's nephew: the then 18-year old Cleto Baroni, who popularized L'Italo-Americano in 1933. Following Baroni's leadership, the newspaper was owned by a total of four different publishers, the last of whom is Robert Barbera, a real estate mogul of Sicilian origins. The paper enjoyed its greatest circulation in 1980, with the acquisition of San Francisco's L'Eco d'Italia.

The current Editor, Mario Trecco, of Venetian origins, was also its publisher from 1971 to 1990. In 1974, Trecco introduced the English section. At that time Trecco was a priest in the Scalabrini Order who was called from Italy specifically to edit the paper, which was then owned by the religious order. In 1990, Trecco left both the priesthood and the paper only to return as editor in 1998.

At the celebrations, the Dry Martini orchestra and singer Nick D'Egidio were on hand to entertain the crowd.

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