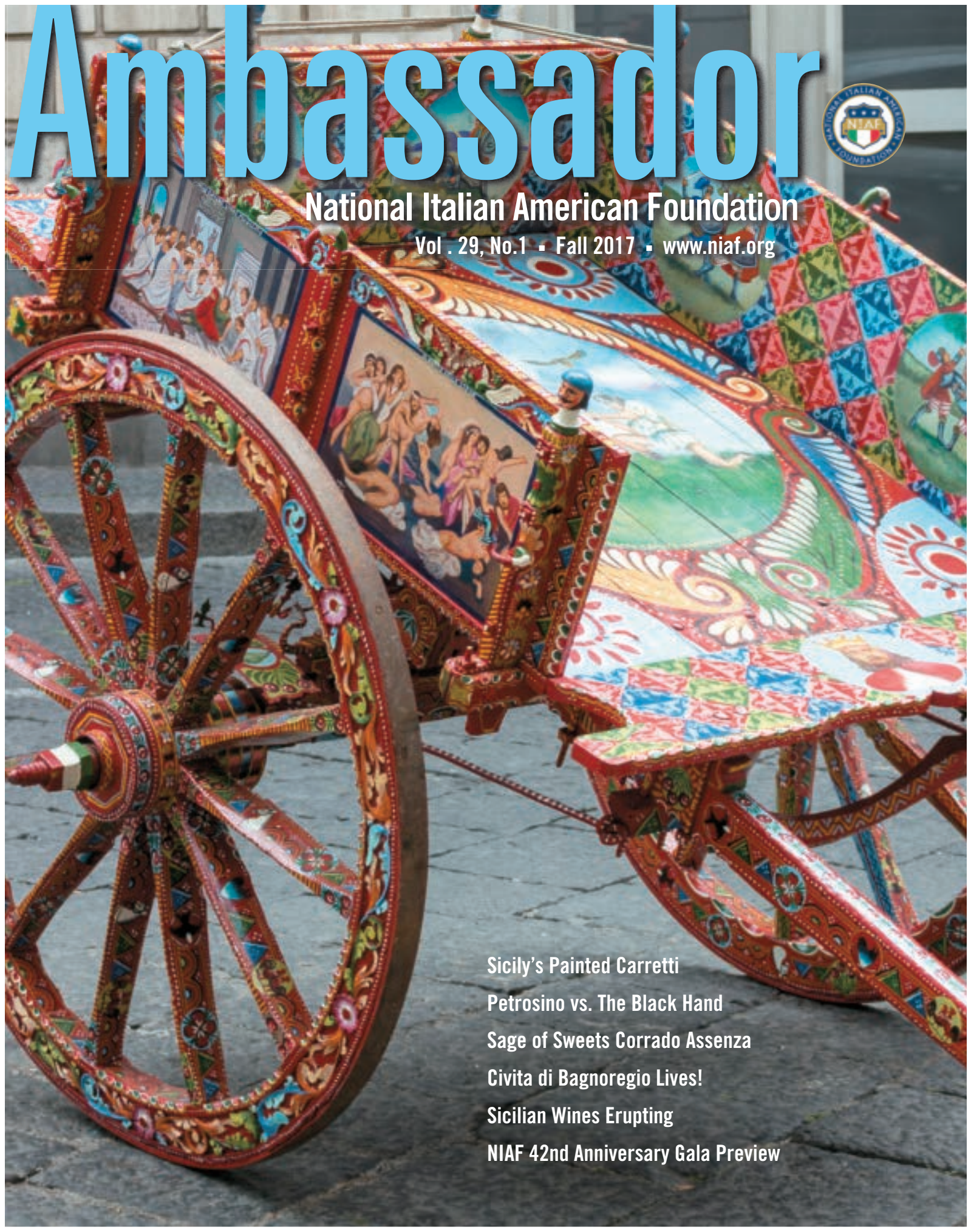


Ambassador



National Italian American Foundation

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Sicily's Painted Carretti
Petrosino vs. The Black Hand
Sage of Sweets Corrado Assenza
Civita di Bagnoregio Lives!
Sicilian Wines Erupting
NIAF 42nd Anniversary Gala Preview



To Bee or Not to Bee

When Hunter College Professor Alba Amoia retired to the tiny town of Torrice, in Italy, she expected that her buzzing research career would end.

One summer evening, however, an encounter with a beehive lodged in her living room window upended those plans. To remove the threatening bees, Amoia called on Dr. Francesco Patrizi, the president of the Beekeepers' Association of Lazio, and neighbor who works throughout the region harvesting honey from his own hives.

When Patrizi mentioned his hypothesis that the chemical compounds of propolis—a resinous substance bees use to caulk their hives—could be isolated to cure Lazio's olive trees infected by invasive species without using pesticides, Amoia's interest was piqued. The duo subsequently became fast friends, and have now joined forces in a new scientific venture.



Amoia is the principal philanthropist behind Società Aurora, a bio-dynamic research laboratory that she, along with Patrizi (right) and biologist Mauro Iannucci (left), will soon inaugurate in nearby Ripi. Harnessing the resources of farmers and beekeepers in the region, the team is busy conducting studies on how organic tinctures made from propolis affect the diseased groves.

Amoia reports, "Our preliminary research reveals the promise of local, all-natural responses to ecological crises at a time when large multinationals are trying to dictate the future of agriculture in Italy."

—Zach LaRock



Giovanni Fortunato — Firenze

Cruising the Amalfi Coast

Sharing the beauty of the Amalfi Coast is personal for Valeria Carrano. Growing up near New Haven, Conn., Carrano's great grandmother regaled the family with tales of her hometown Amalfi.

Family ties back to Italy remained strong and were passed down to Carrano's father who brought her to Italy when she was 18. That's when Carrano's love affair with the Amalfi Coast truly began. After that trip, she returned to the Amalfi Coast every summer, falling a little more in love each time.

After college and working in the hustle and bustle of New York City, the hectic pace of city life had taken its toll. "My cousins had been telling me for years to just come and stay on the Amalfi Coast, so in 2011, I finally took their advice and booked a one-way ticket," she says.

Fast forward six years and she now runs Exclusive Cruises—the fastest growing luxury boat charter company on the Amalfi Coast—with her Italian husband Francesco, who she met after moving to the Amalfi Coast.

"I'm incredibly grateful my family maintained such a strong bond with our Italian heritage, which eventually led me back," she says. "When I can share my love and deep connection to the Amalfi Coast with our clients as they experience this beautiful area on a boat excursion, it feels like I've come full circle."

See more at www.exclusivecruisescapri.com.

—Laura Thayer



NIAF's Persons of Interest