

A Tarantino with heart and pirates

Posted on July 31, 2026 by Amy Kellogg

FLORENCE — How does a successful lawyer with three grown kids justify a plan to spend his entire summer sailing? Well, of course he doesn't need to! But Taranto native Piero Frisani felt it was time in his life to give something back. He landed on the idea of taking kids with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Down syndrome or Fragile X Syndrome on a cruise and fired off dozens of emails to organizations across Italy offering his time and his boat gratis. He did not get a single reply. Then he remembered reading about an Italia Viva deputy who has a child with autism and reached out through a connection. The plan was adopted by ANGSA (Associazione Nazionale Genitori perSone con Autismo) and Frisani is taking kids for short spins, all over Italy with educators on board. The project is called Buonvento but the sailing has not always been smooth. Yet so far it has been a remarkable voyage, giving these young people new experiences in a beautiful setting.

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Piero Frisani at the wheel of the sailing boat with one of the kids *(Credits: Family photos)*

“My idea was to bring the kids from port to port but I was told that was impossible, that the kids can’t spend a long time on the boat. Getting them to stay on is a big victory. Three hours in a closed environment far from land in a place they don’t know. They had to do a series of trainings before coming to the boat. This doesn’t mean all get on. Some arrive and are afraid to embark. Some get on and decide to get off. They are strong when it comes to their decisions.”

Q. What do they tend to enjoy the most?

“The absolute magic is when they go to the wheel. I put a captain’s red cap on the one who gets to steer. I explain how to check what is all around. That for them the “momento massimo”! Some get to swim. Others love the shower. They cool off and relax. They were under stress preparing for this trip and they lie down after the shower and sometimes fall asleep.”

Q. What were some of the most memorable moments?

“We saw an enormous yacht so I said to the kids ‘let’s get close’ and we figured out it belonged to Sergei Brin, the co-founder of Google. It was a lively group. One was fixated with pirates and he said ‘let’s jump aboard!’ We started blowing our horn and the kids shouted, ‘We want free gigas!’”

Q. So far, what is your assessment of this project?

“It’s just a drop in the ocean”

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