PAPPAGALLO

GRIAA Greater Rockford ITALIAN American Association

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More than 100 years of history

St. Anthony of Padua Heritage Room 'labor of love' for Father Ciaramitaro

By Mike Doyle

Father Jim Ciaramitaro first visited St. Anthony of Padua Parish in South Rockford as a young Franciscan postulant in 1975. He returned 13 years later in 1988 as a newly ordained priest and served six years. So, when he returned for a third time in 2010 as pastor, he was very familiar with the church and its long history of serving Rockford's Italian population.

That arrival 12 years ago stirred up an idea in Father Jim that is now the parish's Heritage Rooms. "I had been picturing this for a long time," said Father Jim. "I love this parish and I love history, so it has been a labor of love."

Located on the first floor of the parish's Pedrini Center next to the church in the former Franciscan Friary, the rectory today, the rooms feature a large collection of historical artifacts and memorabilia about the church and its 113-year role as a religious and educational center for Rockford's immigrants from Italy over the years and their descendants. Items include two table candlesticks from the church's founding in 1909; the original school bell; and a chair belonging to the first pastor, Father Anthony Marchesano.

Visitors are encouraged to begin their visit in the smaller of the two rooms which now hold the parish's heritage collection. "When the Friars used to live here, this was the pastor's office," Father Jim said. It continues to be a meeting room. "I wanted the heritage rooms to be active places still used by the parish so people will come in direct contact with our archives," he said. Three walls of the room are lined with display cases of historical items and pictures. On the ledge of a window on the fourth wall is a plaster angel that greeted parishioners in the entrance way of the original church and later greeted the school children after the present church was built in 1929. The school closed and was razed in 1986.

Along another wall is a piece of the communion rail removed from the church in 1967. On a tour of the room, Father Jim pointed out a glass case with a scrapbook of the parish history and its societies, past and present. Two bookcases which flank the opening to the room, contain textbooks from St. Anthony school and other yearbooks, anniversary books and stories of Rockford history. On each side of the bookcase are curio cabinets with photos, documents, diplomas and other items from the school, including a blue "beanie." Father Jim said: "All Catholic school girls wore beanies as part of their uniform because when they went to Mass, they had to have their heads covered back then."



The angel that greeted students when they entered St. Anthony School is on display at the St. Anthony of Padua Heritage Rooms.

"In these rooms you can find all of the histories that have been written about the parish, the school, and the different societies along with their medals and badges," Father Jim said. Among other artifacts and photos are those of the parish's annual St. Joseph Altar, the former Parish Festa, and the other events, when choirs came to St. Anthony from all over the diocese to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 1958 in a televised Mass.

The second room is larger and was once the friars' dining room. It also serves as a meeting room for the Pastoral Council and other groups. On one wall is a portrait of Father Marchesano, painted in his lifetime by Charlotte Durelli and donated by Jasper St. Angel, his great-nephew. On the far end are the dining room's original stained-glass windows, and throughout the room are glass curio cabinets displaying historical items. Over the years, Father

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GRIAA honorees







(Above) Sam Oliveri of Gasparini & Oliveri Funeral Home, Nancy Maffioli Hand and Carl Armato will receive GRIAA's Special Recognition awards at the annual Hall of Fame Dinner, October 8. Stories on pages 2 and 3. (At right) A section of Frank Fiorello's painting at the Ethnic Heritage Museum depicting the Italian experience in South Rockford highlights the St. Angel Agency on South Main Street. Story on Page 4.



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Heritage Room ... *Continued from Page 1*

Jim found these items along with old newspaper articles and various awards stored in boxes in the basements of the church and friary across Ferguson Street

Recent events also played a role in his determination to finish the project. Although St. Anthony was established as a church in the Diocese of Rockford in 1909, Bishop Edward Francis Hoban asked the Conventual Franciscan Friars to take over the parish in 1933. For nearly 90 years the Franciscans provided spiritual guidance to the parish. However, this past May parishioners were notified that the Franciscans could no longer staff St. Anthony due to a lack of personnel. The Diocese of Rockford assigned Father Carl Beekman as pastor beginning July 1, 2022.



Father James Ciaramitaro in front of painting of Father Anthony Marchesano in the St. Anthony of Padua Heritage Room. Father Marchesano was the church's first pastor.

Those events sped up Father Jim's mission to finish the job of gathering and preparing items for public view. "As the time came closer for me to leave, more and more people started to donate substantial things," Father Jim said. "I was happy to get it all." One of the most significant items in the collection is the album with photos of every graduating class from St. Anthony School and St. Francis Consolidated School.

There are many albums, filled by Father Jim but he noted that all the graphic designs were created by church secretary, Doreen Addotta, and the display boxes were prepared by Vicki Dombrowski. There are also newspaper stories major figures in the church's history, including Father Marchesano; Father Dominic Szymanski, who was pastor from 1933-1945, and Father Anastasius Kuzdrzal, who founded the Mass League in 1937, which generated funds that helped the church pay off its debt.



A St. Anthony School beanie. Girls wore beanies in every Catholic school from the late 19th century to the 1970s.

The work preparing the material in the Heritage Rooms represents many hours of effort, but it was truly a labor of love with the goal of warming the hearts of those who lived any part of this history and a bright resource for those interested in learning more about the wonderful place known as St. Anthony Church in South Rockford. Father Jim hopes many people will visit the Heritage Rooms to help keep alive the parish's rich and beautiful history. He was recently assigned to the parish at the Basilica of St. Josaphat in Milwaukee.

To visit the Heritage Rooms at St. Anthony of Padua, please contact the church office at 815-965-2761. The church is located at 1010 Ferguson Street in South Rockford.

Gasparini & Oliveri: Taking care of Rockford's Italians for nearly 100 years

By Mike Doyle



While bakeries, corner grocers and mom-and-pop shops can no longer be found in traditional Italian-American neighborhoods in South Rockford, there had been one constant for more than 90 years. Founded in 1931, Gasparini & Oliveri Funeral Home had been doing business with one goal in mind, said funeral director and owner Sam Oliveri. "One thing my grandfather instilled in me was that we are not in it for the money; it is for the people," Sam said.

The business Anthony Gasparini Sr., and Sam Oliveri began in an alley off Morgan Street behind the Rialto Theater, that never abandoned South Rockford and that served generations of Italian-Americans, will be honored with a Special Recognition Award for Business by the Greater Rockford Italian American Association at its annual Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Dinner at the Verdi Club, Saturday, October 8, 2022. The business will then be recognized at the Columbus Day Mass on Sunday, October 9, at St. Anthony of Padua Church.

"It's an incredible accomplishment for the funeral home," said Sam, grandson of the founder. "I am very, very honored."

The funeral home moved from its original location to Sanford Street, next to the former Venetian Club, then to its current location on Marchesano Drive in 1951. "We've been the only Italian funeral home over the years," Sam said, acknowledging that the first call of literally thousands of Italian-American families in their time of need was to Gasparini and Oliveri. And there is one reason for that, he said. "My mom told me that it's people you take care of. Your rewards don't come here on earth."

So, for years, it was the Gasparini and Oliveri families taking care of other families. "It was a family business, right up to the end," Sam said. After the founders' sons, Tony Gasparini and John Oliveri, Sam joined in 1975. "I took over in 1999 when Big Tony died and I ran it with my uncle John, who died in 2006.

"My plan was to be around for our 100th year of business," Sam said, but health issues forced him to make a change. "That's the sad part. I'm 68, and my doctor said I have to retire."

He is hopeful that the name will continue to be a part of the business. "I'm trying to get an arrangement with another funeral home," Sam said. "It would be Gasparini-Oliveri in association with the other funeral home."

Through Sam, the funeral home has reached out to help with several ventures that benefit South Rockford, including Tinker Cottage, where he served as President of the Board of Trustees; the South West Ideas for Today and Tomorrow (SWIFTT) which promotes economic development in that part of the city; and

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Nancy Maffioli Hand

Volunteering keeps the family together



Nancy Maffioli Hand, right, and her granddaughters, from left, Ella Hand and Erica Schutte work as volunteers at the Granita Tent at the 2022 Festa Italiana.

By Mike Doyle

Nancy Maffioli Hand is more than a 40-plus year volunteer at *Festa Italiana*. She has taken on the responsibility to pass on the volunteer spirit to her family. "*Festa* is always like a family reunion," Nancy said. "To me, family is the priority." As a result, three generations of the Maffioli Family volunteer annually at the *Festa*, the annual event sponsored by the Greater Rockford Italian American Association (GRIAA). "I feel that if I don't (volunteer), I don't feel like I am keeping the family together."

Because of her long-time willingness to help, Nancy will be honored with a Special Recognition Award for Volunteering at GRIAA's annual Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Dinner at the Verdi Club, Saturday, October 8, 2022. She will then be recognized at the Columbus Day Mass on Sunday, October 9, at St. Anthony of Padua Church.

"I'm quite surprised," Nancy said about the recognition. "I know there are a lot of other people who have been there longer

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NOTICE TO OUR READERS

This is a request to our many readers to verify your interest in receiving the *Pappagallo* by mail. We love our readers and want to keep sending you this high-quality publication twice a year at no cost. However, printing and postage costs have risen to the point where we have to take a serious look at our bottom line. We plan to keep sending the *Pappagallo* twice a year, but only if you request further issues. Please complete the adjacent form and return it to the address listed. We will run this notice in the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 issues. If we do not receive word from you that you want to continue to receive our publication, we will remove your name from our mailing list.

Also keep in mind that we make the *Pappagallo* available online and our online readership has increased significantly. If you would rather receive the issue online, please indicate that on the following form.

Finally, as we did in the past, if you are willing to make a donation to become a *Pappagallo* sponsor, we would be most grateful. And, as we did in the past, we will print the names of all sponsors, if desired.

Best regards,

Mike Doyle, editor & Frank Perrecone, assistant editor

Carl Armato

Boylan, NIU Grad has a Will to Win

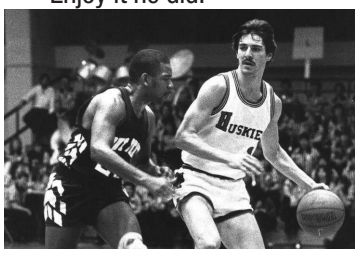
By Paul Anthony Arco

The name Carl Armato is synonymous with local basketball, dating back to his playing days at Boylan High School in the late 1970s.

Armato was a talented, gritty guard, who relied on a deadly shooting touch, constant hustle, and a dogged determination to win. But as good as he was, Armato gives much of the credit to his parents, Sam and Marge, for instilling a passion and drive that he possessed, whether he was playing in a big game or later coaching from the sidelines.

"My parents never missed any athletic event or anything else I was involved with while I was growing up," he says. "And they didn't push me; they were nurturing and supportive. They always said, 'we'll support you as long as you enjoy what you're doing.'"

Enjoy it he did.



Carl Armato works the ball on offense for Northern Illinois University.

Armato absolutely thrived during his long basketball career in which he found success at every level – as a player, coach, and administrator. For his efforts, Armato will receive a Special Recognition Award for Sports at the Greater Rockford Italian American Hall of Fame Annual Dinner Saturday, October 8, at the Verdi Club. He then will be recognized at the Columbus Day Mass at St. Anthony of Padua Church on Sunday, October 9.

"It will be an unbelievably special night," he says. "The icing on the cake would be if my father was alive to be there. But Rockford has such a rich tradition of successful Italian-Americans. To be inducted with a group like this is such a blessing."

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DELLA REPVBBLICA ITALIANA

PRESIDENTE DELL'ORDINE DELLA STELLA DELLA SOLIDARIETÀ ITALIANA

Sulla proposta del Ministro Segretario di Stato per gli Affari Esteri, sentito il Consiglio dell'Ordine della Stella della Solidarietà Italiana, con Decreto in data 21 Marzo 1967

HA CONFERITO

l'onorificenza di Cavaliere dell'Ordine della

Stella della Solidarietà Italiana

Al Signor Frank George St. Angel

con facoltà di fregiarsi dell'insegna stabilita per tale grado onorifico.

p. IL MINISTRO SEGRETARIO DI STATO
PER GLI AFFARI ESTERI
Il Capo del Cerimoniale

The Italian Order of the Title of Cavaliere awarded to Frank St. Angel by the Italian Consul General.

Slices of history:
Italian ambassador, consul general recognize two generations of St. Angel Family

Two significant bits of history, which had been long forgotten, have roots at 1010 South Main Street in the heart of the Italian-American business district of South Rockford in the 20th century. First, it was at this location that Jasper St. Angel, who emigrated from Sambuca, Sicily, at the age of 12, established his company about 13 years after moving to Rockford from Louisiana. The St. Angel Real Estate and Insurance Company dealt in real estate, insurance and construction, and Jasper went on to become the first Italian-American elected to public office. Not only was he the Fifth Ward alderman, he became a business and civic leader.

Through Jasper's efforts, the office at 1010 S. Main Street was designated a branch consular office by the Italian government. In addition, he was instrumental in organizing a visit that the Italian ambassador Vittoris Rolandi made to Rockford in 1924.

St. Angel Real Estate & Insurance Co., remains a family business today, currently run by his grandson Jasper St. Angel, who noted his family's continued diplomatic involvement with the Italian government – the second, of which, took place 43 years later.

"In 1967, my father (Frank) was awarded, by command of the President of Italy, the title of Cavaliere and was inducted into the Italian Order of the Star of Solidarity," Jasper said. "The Italian Consul General Dr. Agusto Russo presented him with this honor for distinguished community service and acting *pro-bono* ombudsman in efforts to reunite the families of post-WWII Italian immigrants in Rockford.

"Extraordinary men to say the least."



St. Angel Receives Italian Award . .

Rockford Township Assistant Supervisor Frank G. St. Angel, center, is shown with his wife Tuesday as Italian Consul General Dr. Agusto Russo, Chicago, presents him the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity, on the highest awards given by the Italian ernment. (Morning Star photo)

The Rockford Morning Star printed a photo of St. Angel and his wife Connie receiving the award from the Italian Consul General.



The medal St. Angel received.

Gasparini & Oliveri ... *Continued from Page 2*

the Ethnic Heritage Museum, which named him its Man of the Year in 2014. A long-time donor to the city's annual Fourth of July Fireworks Show, the 2016 Festival of Lights was dedicated in his name. He has been recognized by the Sons of Italy for his contributions to Italian-American culture and July 14, 2014, was designated as Sam Oliveri Day by the City of Rockford.

As a lover of nature, Sam volunteers for Severson Dells Nature Center. He also volunteers for the National Audubon Society and the Illinois National History survey as he participates in bird counts for the Northern Illinois area. These counts track bird populations and migration which provide information for future land management decisions.

Foremost in the business and with Sam is the bond with St. Anthony of Padua Church and the Franciscan Friars who served the parish until this year. "Whatever the church wanted, Gasparini and Oliveri was there," he said. That included donating church calendars printed in three languages that the parish serves – English, Italian and Spanish. "This is the first year that we won't be doing it," he said.

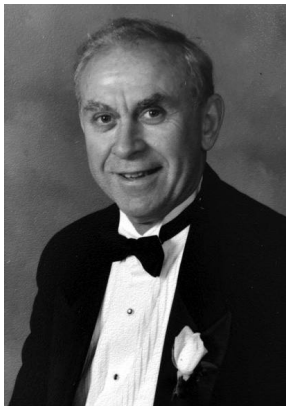
Gasparini and Oliveri's legacy is a monument to dedication in providing a necessary service to the generations of Italian-Americans whose roots reach deep in South Rockford.

"I am going to miss serving the community," Sam said. "A great deal of my inspiration comes from my wife, Patty. She has provided me support and love throughout the years in this delicate industry."

In memory of author, historian, veteran Vincent Las Casas

Wrote book on Rockford's Italian immigrants, designed Italian exhibit

By Valeri DeCastris



Rockford native Vincent Las Casas

Vincent Las Casas, Jr. sought me out once when he was visiting Rockford because he had learned that I was active in preserving the rich history of Italian Americans in Rockford. He asked me to help him with his book on the Italian immigration in Rockford, "*Non Dimenticare*: *Italian Immigration to Rockford, 1878-1998*, which GRIAA sold.

Vince died on February 9, 2022. We had become fast friends, and he always called me when he came to Rockford, and my husband David and I would meet him. We visited he and Joan in Maryland, where he lived. We spoke of his intention to write a book on South Rockford, *Jingling Pockets*, and he wanted me to try to get funding for its publication. Ours was a mutual admiration, but he certainly deserved much more acclaim that I could ever deserve.

In my opinion, Vince's greatest gift to Rockford was his direct involvement in the creation of the Italian history exhibit at Midway Village and Museum. The museum had received a large grant for its proposed "Many Faces, One Community" exhibit, and it was looking for information from area families on Rockford's immigration history. A committee was formed, on which some GRIAA board members were active, to help plan the museum's largest exhibit – one large enough to warrant a whole building in which to house it.

Vince complained to me that he had visited the museum and learned that, initially, there was no consideration for an exhibit on Rockford's Italians. "You would think there wasn't even a single Italian in that town," he said. A bit outraged and highly motivated, he helped to establish a permanent replica of an Italian kitchen in the new exhibit, which might never have happened without him. He took his inspiration from the Gaziano home on Ferguson Street.

Because he lived his adult life in Maryland working for the federal government in a high-security position, some people there and in Rockford as well don't know about his humble beginnings on Winnebago Street, across from Tinker Swiss Cottage. Or of his pivotal involvement with the preservation of the Italian experience locally and nationally. Or how much he means to those of us in Rockford with Italian roots.

Alex Las Casas, Jr., his nephew, said he will be eternally grateful for the time Vince, then stationed in Rome, spent with him and family members in Italy. Vince took a week off and, using an American embassy car, drove from the Italian Alps to the Isle of Capri and points in between. "The time talking with him as we drove and visited half of the churches in Italy is a highlight of my life," Alex said. "As a child, Uncle Vince gave me a soldier's hat from Vietnam. Not from our side. From theirs. He told me he visited 10 countries over the course of a week and the hat was retrieved from a 'hot zone.' It was always very exciting to have Uncle Vince visit, which he did often. He would share parts of stories with me which he felt he could share and wouldn't give a lot of detail as to his career activities. But, enough to keep me curious."

Grazie mille Vince, for documenting the lives and roles of Italian-Americans in Rockford. We salute you for a job well done and appreciated. You and your work will never be forgotten. Rest in peace, *paisano*.

Nancy Maffioli Hand ... *Continued from Page 2*

than I have, but I am very honored. I think it's pretty neat."

Nancy began volunteering in the early 1980s, first at the Sausage Tent, then Fashion and has been the chair or co-chair of Granita since 1989. Her involvement with that tent began with a letter from her brother Paul Maffioli, who was the *Festa* Chair that year. "When Paul became chair in 1989, he wrote me a letter and said that we all should be involved in the *Festa* because it's our heritage to pass it on to the family." Nancy and her other brother, Lewis, became co-chairs of Granita in 1989, then he went on to be the chair in 1991.

The heritage Paul spoke of is significant. Nancy is the oldest of the Maffioli siblings, followed by Lewis, Paul and Linda Edmunds. Their great-grandfather Luigi Maffioli was the first Italian family to settle in Rockford in 1878. That he paved the way for thousands of others to settle here is a source of pride in the family. "It really is quite an honor," Nancy said.

Several family members have taken on leadership positions at the *Festa*; Paul returned to chair again in 1994, and his son Mike chaired in 2013. In the 2022 event, Nancy chaired Granita, while her son Ryan Hand and granddaughter Ella Hand were co-chairs. Dawn Maffioli chaired Fashions and Mark and Carly Maffioli took photos.

In addition, other cousins have chaired Zucchini and Pizza, and cousins from near and far returned this year.

And Nancy's involvement is not about to end. "I have three granddaughters, Erica, 21; Ella, 16 and Avery, 10, and they all had a fit last year when I said I was going to retire and let somebody else take the tent," she said. "They all cried." Then one wrote her a letter stating that wasn't about to happen. "Ella wrote that I had to do this until I was 95," Nancy said with a laugh. "And she made me sign it."

This year, Ryan, Ella and Erica helped to run the tent, while many of Ella's friends volunteered.

"The kids are so excited about *Festa*," she said. "We always thought it would end, but the kids want to carry it on."

Dual citizenship journey has twists, turns

No hurry ... two-year wait for appointment with Italian consulate

By Frank Perrecone

In the Fall 2021 edition of *Pappagallo*, I wrote about the start of my journey to obtain dual Italian citizenship. At that time, I was waiting to hear from Italian Citizenship Assistance (ICA) to determine if the documents proving I qualify for citizenship by descent were in proper order to present to the Italian Consulate in Chicago.

ICA, the firm I retained to assist in securing citizenship, noticed two inconsistencies. The name appearing on my mother's birth certificate is listed as Mary and not Marie, the name she has always used. My grandfather's name on her birth certificate is listed as Luke and not his Italian name, Leolucca, or his American name, Louis. I was told by ICA that the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) required an affidavit by my mother to request the name changes. ICA sent me the completed affidavit, my mother signed it, and the affidavit was sent to Springfield.

A couple months later, my mother received a letter from IDPH rejecting the request. Not only was the request rejected, but IDPH found another error on her birth certificate – my grandfather's age at the time of her birth was off by a year. That, too, needed to be corrected.

To make the necessary corrections, IDPH required certain documents that existed before my mother and grandfather each turned 19 years old. Such documents would have been dated before 1950 and 1912, respectively, and would contain their names and dates of birth. Obtaining the requested documents regarding my grandfather is nearly impossible. According to IDPH, the other option is a court order, commonly referred to as a "One and the Same Person" order.

Upon reassessing the situation, my ICA representative told me that the discrepancies should not present an obstacle, as the rest of the submitted documentation is consistent. And, it is common for there to be minor discrepancies in vital documents due to limited education and language barriers of early Italian immigrants.

The next step is for documents secured on my behalf to receive "Apostilles" (authentication of a public document for use in foreign nations). Upon obtaining the last Apostille, ICA will organize my documents, translate them into Italian, prepare my application for citizenship and put everything together in a binder to submit to the consulate in advance of my appointment.



The consulate releases a small number of appointment dates and times each week. Demand for dual citizenship appointments is high. A backlog of applications piled up when the consulate was not considering citizenship requests due to COVID-19. I was told by ICA that I could try, or they could try, to get an appointment. But the quickest way is to retain a firm that has computer software to snag appointments as they are released each week. The cost for that ranges from $149 to $199 per appointment.

I decided to pay the fee to schedule the appointment. Within a week the consulate in Chicago notified me by email my appointment is July 30, 2024. In-person appointments have been suspended due to the pandemic. On the day of the appointment, the consular staff reviews the documentation and either grants the application for citizenship, denies it outright, or requests additional documentation that will be reviewed at a second appointment. Notification is made by email.

2022 Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Award Banquet
Saturday, October 8th, 2022

Verdi Club, 782 N Madison St. Rockford

Please join us to honor our 2022 Special Recognition inductees:

Sam Oliveri, Carl Armato, and Nancy Hand

We encourage all Hall of Fame members to attend and be recognized.

Please visit www.GRIAA.org **to print your reservation form or**
Email Karen Cantele at kkcantele22@gmail.com
Reservations are required

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Please join us for the 2022 Columbus Day Mass
Sunday, October 9th
10:30 a.m. at St. Anthony's Church
1010 Ferguson St., Rockford, IL

All members of the Hall of Fame, Past Inductees and their families, are invited to be a part of the entrance procession at Mass. Please arrive at 10:15 a.m.

Mamma mia! The mother of Italian interjections

Learning when to use 'allora'

By Rosaria Mercuri Ford

Who has not heard the Italian expression *Mamma mia!* You do not need to be Italian to understand the meaning of this exclamation and, if you are of Italian descent, you have probably heard it – and used it – hundreds of times.

*Mamma mia! (*or simply *Mamma!)* is one of the most frequent Italian exclamations, used as interjection, which can express various moods and feelings, depending on the conversational context and voice intonation.

All languages use interjections which consist of, for the most part, simple words, short phrases or just monosyllabic utterances. These exclamations are deeply shared by the community of speakers and quickly transmit one's emotive response to a given situation. They can express astonishment, admiration, surprise, skepticism, resignation, denial, doubt, invitation, agreement, boredom, uncertainty and so on ... even physical pain, insult and profanity. Like proverbs and sayings, they are not always easy to translate into another language because of their intrinsic cultural nature.

Here are some ways in which *Mamma mia!,* the queen of all interjections, expresses the different feelings of admiration, disgust, pain and annoyance:

Mamma mia, che bel bambino! Oh my, what a beautiful child!
Mamma, che confusione! This is more like: Man, what a mess!
Che mal di stomaco, mamma mia! Gosh, what an awful stomach ache!
Mamma mia, lasciami in pace! Leave me alone, for heaven's sake!

Other interesting Italian expressions used as interjections are: *magari*, *allora*, *meno male*, *insomma*, *oddio*, *caspita*, *dai* and *diamine*. Let's look at a couple of them. *Magari!* which comes from the Greek word *Makàri* expresses a desire of some sort, or a wish for an acceptable outcome. Here are some examples:

Sei in vacanza? Magari!, non posso prendere neanche un giorno fino ad Ottobre. Are you on vacation? "Don't I wish! I won't have any days until October.
Vuoi un caffè? Magari, ti svegli un po! "How about some coffee? That should wake you up a bit!
Il fitto è troppo caro per una persona, magari in due. The rent is too high for one person, maybe sharing it with someone else.
Non ti preoccupare della bimba, magari si è sbucciato solo un ginocchio! Do not worry about the little girl, she probably just scraped her knee.
Allora! Allora? From Latin *ad illam oram* (at that time, then), this expression, normally occurring as an adverb, can convey impatience, skepticism, resignation, when used as an interjection:
Allora? Vieni con noi o resti a casa? So, will you go with us or stay at home?
Dimmi chi è stato, allora! Tell me who did it, then!
Allora, non c'è niente da fare. Well, then, there is nothing we can do about it.
Meno male! or Menomale! literally means "less bad" and sounds like a gasped acceptance of a less evil. The English expression that comes close to it is the more positive sounding, thank goodness. Here are some examples:
Menomale, è riuscito il sole! Not so bad, the sun came out again.
Menomale che non ho perso il treno! Thank goodness, I didn't miss the train!
La nonna è caduta ma non si è fatta niente. Meno male. Grandma fell but she did not get hurt. It could have been worse.

Carl Armato ... *Continued from Page 3*

Armato was an All-NIC-9 player at Boylan High School, and later played guard at Northern Illinois University, where he was a two-year captain and named honorable mention All-MAC player his junior season. Armato and his teammates were inducted into the NIU Athletics Hall of Fame in 2009.

One of the highlights of his playing career took place in the summer of 1983, when Armato was chosen to play on an Italian-American all-star basketball team prior to his senior year at NIU. Italian-American players from across the U.S. toured Italy for more than two weeks, playing against pro teams from Italy and other European countries.

"I played for the love of the game, and I shared that love with my teammates," he says.

Once his playing days were over, Armato turned to coaching. He started his career at Winnebago High School before moving on to DeKalb High School. Armato was inducted into the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1989.

For 12 years, he was the head coach for Rock Valley College, where his men's teams achieved plenty of success, including three North Central Community College Conference titles and a Region IV championship in 2001. He earned multiple coach of the year awards, and in 2015 was named to RVC's Athletics Hall of Fame.

Over the next several years, Armato spent time as the director of athletics for Rockford Public Schools and as associate athletics director at NIU. He later was an assistant coach for NIU's men's & women's teams and also coached girls at Jefferson and boys at Guilford.

These days, Armato remains close to the action. He's an analyst for NIU men's and women's basketball games on ESPN3.com. He also works as a substitute teacher and administrator for Rockford Public Schools. It's one more way Armato can give back to young people.

"I get a chance to work with kids and try to help mold and develop their character," he says. "I feel discipline is important in life and some kids lack supervision due to circumstances beyond their control. My hope is I can make a difference in their lives in a positive way."

Armato credits the guidance and teachings of many of the coaches he played for or coached with including legendary Boylan coach Dolph Stanley and long-time NIU coach John McDougal.

"I was blessed to have wonderful coaches from the time I started play at St. Bernadette Catholic School," says Armato. "This award would not be possible without the help, time, and the teachings of so many great coaches, former teammates and players."

And he has no regrets.

"I wouldn't change a thing," he says. "I was exposed to so many different experiences thanks to the path I chose."

A place to call home: Ferentino, Italy

By Dina Getty

I recently returned from Ferentino, Italy, traveling there for the fifth time in eight years. I accompanied Anna Reali and her parents, Gino and Palma, all Rockford Italian Sister City Alliance (RISCA) board members. During this time, I came to realize that Ferentino is not only our Sister City but is also our home.

During our three-week stay, we were guests of families and friends of students who had visited us as part of our student exchange program. RISCA has organized cultural exchanges between schools of the two cities. Students from IIS M Filetico High School in Ferentino have been involved in the exchanges, and we are hopeful another group of students will be visiting Rockford in October, 2022.

My first visit to Ferentino was shortly after joining RISCA in 2014. Our son, Steve accompanied me and, with the help of the Reali family from Rockford and Luigi Sonn from Ferentino, we met our family. By this time, 100 years had passed since my Nonno, Rocco Tartaglia, immigrated to Rockford. Since joining RISCA, myself and family cannot get enough of Ferentino, and I feel so blessed to be part of the RISCA organization that supports and fosters continued relationships between the two cities.

RISCA would like to thank Professor Ermelinda Andrelli, who has always been a part of the student exchange program. She accompanies the students each trip. Most of my time in Ferentino was spent with Ermeinda, who brought me on several excursions through the Ferentino region. I discovered new places to visit. One was Filettino, home of Patrizia, another teacher, and her husband Renato. We visited Anagni and its amazing crypt. The Province of Frosinone offered a big city feel with traditional Italian flair. And a dazzling trip to the Abbey of Trisulti was humbling.

Several students from trips past made an effort to see Anna and I while we were there. Marina Sordi and her brother Gabriele met us for wine in the piazza. Matteo Cervone, his sister Allesia and their parents, Mara and Carlo, treated us to a day in Alatri and to dinner with the best pizza in the world in Fumone. They were also gracious enough to host me for a day at their seaside home in Terracina. Finally, we were treated to, of course, a homemade authentic Italian dinner with the Manrico Bechelli family. Manrico Bechelli was an exchange student in 2019. His mother created dishes from every region in Italy. Dinner lasted several hours and Manrico showed off his musical talents with the guitar and singing.

This trip afforded us to meet new and wonderful people in Ferentino. Fulvio Bernola owns a photography studio in Piazza Matteotti. He hosts a photograph festival every September, attracting photographers from all over the region. He has invited Rockford to participate in 2023. We went almost daily to Pina's flower shop on Via Guglielmo Marconi, where she created the most beautiful arrangements that we were able to gift to our hosts time and time again. Sabrina, who owns the laundromat in the piazza, could not have been more gracious and patient with our requests during the three-week stay.

Lots of productive RISCA business was done. We met with



Dina Getty (fourth from left) with the Ferentino Pro Loco group, similar to a chamber of commerce.

Don Giuseppe Principali, a priest who expressed an interest in inviting a Rockford delegation to Ferentino in May 2023 to celebrate its annual St. Ambrogio Festival. Talks are underway. He then wants to travel to Rockford and gift to our community a religious relic that will bind our communities through the church. Ferentino Mayor Antonio Pompeo sent his greetings to Rockford and was grateful for the gifts that were presented to him on behalf of Rockford Mayor Tom McNamara. Along those same lines, we had discussions with *Pro Loco*, or chamber of commerce, President Luciano Fiorini who organized a very productive meeting between RISCA and his organization. We discussed future collaborations. RISCA made a donation to their organization.

There is no better place in the world to relax than Italy. Anna, myself and friends enjoyed the fine wine and conversation at both Bar Giorgi and Piazza Mateotti. We had an extraordinary dinner *al fresco* at the Trattoria Consolare. Outdoor concerts were happening often, and we enjoyed performances of the Acoustic Guitar Festival and a concert with James Senese, an Italian jazz musician and vocalist.

I want to thank my Tartaglia Family in Ferentino for always watching out for me, any guests I bring to Ferentino and for fostering new friendships with people they have met from our visits there. They exemplify what Italy is all about – tradition, family, respect and joyful gatherings. RISCA is committed to helping our sister city relationship with Ferentino grow stronger and more meaningful as the years go by. It is truly home for me and so many others. *Un abbraccio e amore a tutti. Grazie Ferentino!*

A version of this letter appeared in the Ferentino newspaper.

Taste of Italy returns November 6

After a two-year absence, RISCA's Taste of Italy returns from noon to 2 p.m., Sunday, November 6, at the Venetian Club. Authentic food will be provided by local Italian restaurants and clubs. Tickets are $25 and for information send an email to risca2006@gmail.com or by contacting a board member. Students from Ferentino, Italy, are expected to be in attendance.

Apennines: Backbone of Italy



Hikers on a trail in the Apennines.

Italy comes across as a country of hot-tempered, passionate people. So much so, that even Mother Nature has given it fierce characteristics. The most seismically active country in Europe, it's no surprise that Italy is home to two incredible mountain ranges: the Alps and the Apennine Mountains, although they are like chalk and cheese.

The Apennines, known as the *Appennino* in Italy, are the backbone of the country and its second major massif extends 870 miles from Cadibona Pass in the Northwest, close to the Maritime Alps, to the Egadi Islands west of Sicily. Their width ranges from 25 to 125 miles The range follows a northwest-southeast orientation as far as Calabria at the southern tip of Italy, then the range changes direction – to the south and then to the west. The name Apennines comes from the Celtic word *penn* "mountain, summit," but the etymology is uncertain.

Made of argillaceous rocks, or those containing clay and limestone, the Apennines are a much rounder shape with gentle slopes, differentiating them from the Alps. There aren't a lot of majestic glaciers bedazzled in snow or hidden treacherous crevasses. In fact, the only glacier, Calderone Glacier, is located in the Gran Sassomountain group in central Italy.

The peaks in the Apennine mountains are modest in elevation, all of them sit below 9,800 feet. The highest summit of the range, Mount Corno or *Corno Grande*, admirably nicknamed Big Horn of Gran Sasso, towers over the surrounding landscape at 9,550 feet.

The Apennines are Italy's equivalent of North America's Great Divide, but on a much smaller scale (about one-third). As well as being the watershed, these were literally a great divide because, until the coming of the railroads, it was quicker to sail from Ancona on the Adriatic East coast to Rome on the west than it was to travel overland. Drivers today who have to cross still complain about the task.

A number of long hiking trails wind through the Apennines. Of note is European walking route E1 coming from northern Europe and traversing the lengths of the northern and central Apennines. The Grand Italian Trail begins in Trieste and after winding through the Alpine arc traverses the entire Apennine system, Sicily and Sardinia. Also, the Alta Via dei Parchiin the region of Emilia Romagna crosses seven national and regional parks and runs mostly on the ridge (the watershed Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany, therefore, Adriatic and Tyrrhenian).

The local products consist of chestnut, honey, mushrooms, cheese (the best Parmesan comes from the Apenninesin the province of Reggio Emillia), succulent cold cuts, berries and black truffles.



Large beech forests, many of which are centuries old and probably among the oldest in Europe, cover the Appenine Mountains slopes in many areas.

The signature dishes of the Apennines are tortelli (fresh pasta filled with cheese and vegetables), polenta served with mushrooms or wild game, and tigelle and crescentine (bread substitutes served with local ham or spreadable lard).

The *osteries* on the Apennines are simple, authentic places where genuine wine and simple food a reserved. When the service is over, the locals play cards or just reunite to talk over coffee or red wine.

So, if you are looking for the "real" Italy, the Apennines might be your next destination. The best time to go would be from May through July, and in mid-September.

Sources: tourissimotravel.com, encyclopediabrittanica.com

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Scholarship opportunities for Italian-American students

Several scholarships are available for students of Italian-American descent ranging from elementary and high school to college and post-graduate schools.

Greater Rockford Italian American Association

Through this committee, scholarships are presented annually to area Italian American families to defray the cost of a parochial education. Through the 2021 *Festa Italiana*, more than $755,000 in scholarships has ben presented. Visit www.griaa.org, then onto the Scholarship Committee, chaired by Ben Todaro and Frank Valentine. Scholarship information can be viewed and printed by clicking on Application Form.

Columbian Club Charitable Foundation

Several scholarships of various amounts are awarded to graduating high school seniors and undergraduate/graduate students of Italian descent who are permanent residents of the state of Illinois. Scholarships are also available for undergraduates in music education and graduate students in law, medicine, and dentistry. Deadline for application for 2023 graduates is November 30, 2022. Contact the foundation at www.columbianclub.org.

Sons of Italy Foundation, Illinois

Several scholarships will be awarded to students of full or partial Italian ancestry graduating from public or private high school. Financial need, scholastic record, activities showing character and leadership are the criteria. Personal statements and faculty recommendations are required. The deadline for application is February 28, 2023. For information for 2023 scholarships, contact the Illinois Sons of Italy Foundation, 9447 W. 144th Place, Orland Park, IL, 60462or by email at osia.org.

National Italian American Foundation

Sixty to 70 scholarships from $2,500 to $12,000 are awarded annually to undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate, medical and law students. Applicants must be of Italian descent and members of NIAF. Application for the 2023-24 academic year opens December 1, 2022, and deadline is March 1, 2023. Information is available at www.niaf.org/scholarships.

2022-23 Fall, Winter Festivals in Italy

September *(Settembre)*
January
13 – *Volto Santo Luminara* Festival, Lucca, processions and fair

October *(Ottobre)*
2-22 – Rubens Retrospective, Doge Palace, Genoa

November *(Novembre)*
22 – Feast of St. Cecilia
26-27 – Oberdrauburg Christmas Festival Market, Signa

December (*Dicembre*)
7 – Feast of St. Ambrose, Milan

January (*Gennaio*)
20-22 – *Arte Fier*e, Bergamo

February (Febbraio)
11-21 – *Carnevale*, Venice

Five underrated regions of Italy with great food, wine

If you can't find great food and drink in Italy, you aren't looking. But there is much more beyond a simple meal of *cacio e pepe* in Rome, a lavish dinner at one of the 60 restaurants in the Lombardy region with a Michelin star or wine from Tuscany. You may want to consider these less-traveled regions that truly meet the mark with world-renowned food and wine.

Emelia Romagna – This region includes Bologna, Italy's gastronomy capital; Parma, think cheese and the very best prosciutto; and Modena, known for its sharp balsamic vinegar.

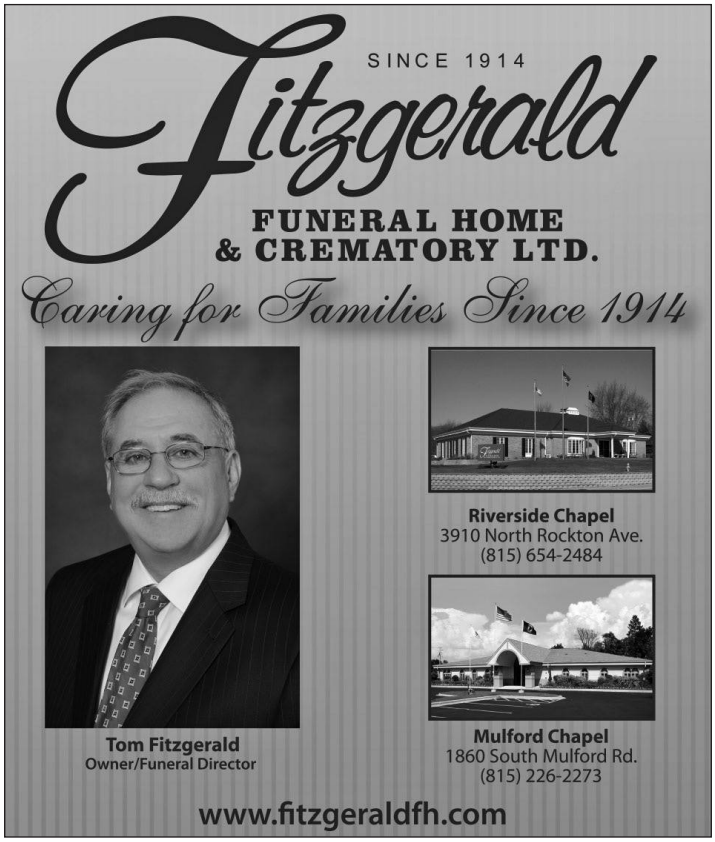
Sicily – The iconic island is where you can find the best cannoli, usually encrusted with home-grown pistachios. Its wine is becoming more appreciated, especially brands from Marsala in the far west to those grown on the rich volcanic soil of Mt. Etna.

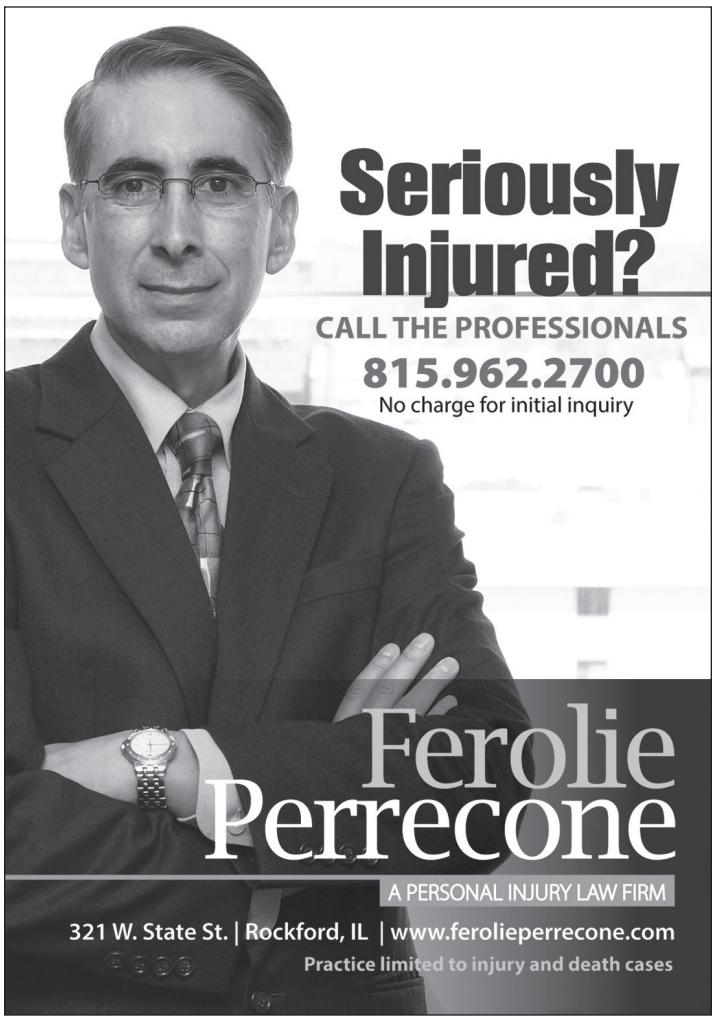
Piedmont – With Turin at its center, Piedmont is a rising star in food circles. Already known for its signature white truffles and rich Barolo wines, the region is experiencing a fusion of modern and experimental takes on traditional Italian food.

Liguria – If you like pesto sauce, you should know it originated as *pesto alla Geneovese*, which honors Genoa, the region's capital. The area's rich mineral soil is ideal for growing herbs, such as basil, and for the growth of the *Taggiasca* olive, used in its light and flavorful oil.

Puglia – On the heel of the boot, Puglia is known for its stunning villages and seaside towns, olive groves and vineyards, most notably wine from the Primitovo grape that's similar to zinfadel. The village of Altamura is known for bread created from durum wheat and baked in a wood oven. It has protected status and the recipe dates back to the Middle Ages.

Source: thepointsguy.com





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Missed the cooking demonstrations at *Festa Italiana?* Here are the recipes

Whether in the past, present or future, chances are that most Italian family gatherings feature food. And food, of course, is one of the greatest draws of *GRIAA's Festa Italiana,* but, this year, the organizers of the Cultural Tent took it a step further. Chairs Rosie Scalise Sheridan, Bea Ricotta and Frank Perrecone organized *Cucina Italiana:* Rockford Style.

The name came from the 1995 cookbook compiled by a committee and printed by the Greater Rockford Columbus Day Committee, the forerunner of GRIAA. While out of print, the cookbook is still in demand and most families' copies have dog-eared pages filled with notes, recipe changes and sugo splatters. The book's cover adorned the front cover of the 2022 *Festa Italiana* magazine.

The recipes in the cookbook came from kitchens we grew up in, and that was the idea behind Meet the Chefs. Six amateur chefs, some with their sous-chefs, were scheduled to demonstrate recipes in the Cultural Tent on Saturday and Sunday, August 6-7. While Saturday's chefs went on as schedule, the thunderstorm and driving rain of Sunday forced cancellation of that day's events.

"You couldn't do anything about the weather," Rosie said. "Saturday's demonstrations were wonderful and nicely attended."

Had it all worked out, the array of dishes would have made for a wonderful Italian feast with soup, salad, an entrée, pasta, vegetable and a dessert. "The combination was my intention, but it really did fall into place," Rosie said. "The chefs did what they wanted to do."

Here are the recipes, in order of scheduled appearance:

Sicilian Orange Salad

Presented by Jody Perrecone, assisted by Rita Perrecone Hall



Jody Perrecone (right) and Rita Perrecone Hall prepare to demonstrate Sicilian Orange Salad.

4-5 navel oranges, peeled and separated into slices or sliced into ¼-inch rounds
1 small purple onion, thinly sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
1/4-1/2 cup celery, thinly sliced
1 bulb fennel, thinly sliced
3-4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar (or to taste)
Salt and pepper

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. Pour into a serving bowl.

Source: Jo Mera Varisco

Italian Wedding Soup

Presented by Mike Doyle, assisted by Nora Cipolla Doyle

Meatballs

1 pound ground turkey (or ground chuck)
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
½ cup bread crumbs
½ cup Pecorino Romano cheese, grated
1 egg
¼ teaspoon pepper

In a large mixing bowl, combine ground turkey, garlic, bread crumbs, parsley, cheese, egg and pepper. Toss gently to mix then roll into small balls and set aside.



Mike Doyle and Nora Cipolla Doyle prepared Italian Wedding Soup as their demonstration.

Soup

3 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium carrot, chopped
1 celery rib, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
6-8 cups chicken broth
1 Parmesan rind (optional)
1 bunch spinach
Salt and pepper
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
Parmesan cheese, for serving
1 cup pasta (orzo or ditalini)

Place olive oil in a soup pot and add onion, carrots and celery. Cook five minutes or until just tender, then add garlic, cooking 1-2 minutes. Add chicken broth and Parmesan rind and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes. Add pasta and cook until tender (or cook separately), then add meatballs, spinach and salt and pepper until meatballs are done. Discard Parmesan rind. Sprinkle with parsley and serve with grated cheese.

Pasta with Peas

Presented by Maria Tarara Caruana, assisted by her husband Gary Caruana

1-pound frozen Petite Peas
1 medium sweet onion, diced
2-3 garlic cloves, sliced thinly (optional)
¼ cup olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
8 ounces small pasta, cooked *al dente* (reserve 1 cup pasta water)
Grated Romano Pecorino cheese



Maria Tarara Caruana and Gary Caruana demonstrated Pasta with Peas.

Sauté onions in olive oil over medium heat until translucent or until barely brown. Add garlic and sauté another minute. Add frozen peas, salt and pepper and bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer for 10-15 minutes. Stir often during cooking and add ¼-cup water if mixture becomes too dry. When cooked, adjust seasoning to taste. For pasta, use a

medium pot and cook pasta in salted water according to package directions. When pasta is *al dente*, drain but reserve one cup of water. Add cooked peas to drained pasta, ¼ cup grated cheese and mix, adding pasta water gradually to form a nice, glossy sauce. Serve with additional cheese.



Visitors to the Cultural Tent at Festa Italiana watch as a pair of chefs demonstrate their Italian culinary skills.

Sicilian Stuffed Artichokes

Presented by Annette Parrovecchio-Jurgenson

4 artichokes
Romano cheese, cut into small, 1-inch pieces
Garlic cloves, thinly sliced (to taste)
Italian seasoned breadcrumbs
Olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Wash the artichokes, cutting off stems and ½-inch off the top. Cut the tips off the sharply-pointed leaves. Gently open the leaves and add pieces of sliced garlic and cheese. Sprinkle Italian bread crumbs into all of the leaves. Lightly salt and pepper to taste. Place artichokes in large frying pan. They may touch. Fill the pan ¼ full with water. Drizzle the tops of the artichokes with olive oil. On the stovetop, bring water to boil, then turn on low medium to simmer, covered for 40-60 minutes or until tender. Add water as needed to maintain level.

Tuscan Chicken

Presented by Joe and Connie Chiarelli

2 pounds chicken breasts or thighs, seasoned with salt, pepper, sage, thyme
8 ounces mushrooms, sliced
½ yellow onion, diced
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2 medium tomatoes, diced
15 ounce can Cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
½ cup chopped sundried tomatoes
1/3 cup black olives
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
Oregano
2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped for garnish
Salt and pepper to taste

Season both sides of chicken with salt, pepper, sage, and thyme. In a large skillet, heat some oil over medium heat, then add the chicken and sear both sides. Reduce heat and cook until chicken is thoroughly cooked. Remove chicken and set aside. Add 1tablespoon olive oil to the skillet and sauté mushrooms until tender. Remove mushrooms from skillet and set aside. Add 2 tablespoons olive oil to skillet and cook onions until translucent, then add garlic and sundried tomatoes and sauté for about 2 minutes. Add tomatoes, Cannellini beans and black olives. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle in oregano, then drizzle the balsamic vinegar and honey. Stir few minutes until all combined. Add the cooked mushrooms to the skillet and stir, then add cooked chicken and cook for additional 1-2 minutes, or until chicken is heated through. Add more salt and pepper as needed. Garnish with fresh basil and serve.

Italian Wedding Cookies

Presented by Polly Matranga Happich

¾ cup margarine
½ cup sugar
3 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 tablespoons almond or anise extract or flavoring
3 cups flour
1 tablespoon baking powder

Mix all wet ingredients, then add dry ingredients and mix well in a bowl. Roll drop by the teaspoon on cookie sheets. Bake at 350 degrees until brown.

Frosting

2 ½ cups powder sugar
2-3 teaspoons water
One drop almond flavoring

Mix ingredients and beat until smooth. Frost with a light glaze, adding sprinkles when almost dry.



An array of Italian vegetables, including a pair of cucuzza and an artichoke, were on display at the Cultural Tent

You can help with the history of a Rockford Italian neighborhood


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This advertising broadside was printed about 1915, advertising lots for sale in South Rockford. Another version was printed in Italian on the other side of the ad.

By Laura B. Furman, Curator, Midway Village Museum

Italian immigration to the United States brought over 200,000 Italian families to the United States annually in the early 1900s. Many, of course, found their way to Rockford.

Midway Village Museum has an intriguing advertising broadside in its collection that speaks to the arrival of Italian families and the development of community by those families. On it, J.B. Whitehead realty advertises real estate parcels for sale. The sale information is shared in English on one side and Italian on the reverse.

The poster, which dates from around 1915, declared a "Big Sale" on 101 lots located in a three-city block radius. Bounded by Cunningham Street on the north, Sanford on the east, Kent Street on the south, and Central Avenue to the west, the neighborhood was mere blocks from the recently established Italian parish church, St. Anthony of Padua.

Whitehead promoted that these lots were being sold at drastically discounted rates – from $5 down and $1 per week for lots priced at $225-$275. For lots priced at $400-$550, $25 down and $2 per week were required.

Whitehead also pointed out that the lots being sold were conveniently located for laborers working at the Emerson-Brantingham Company or at companies in the Water Power and railroad districts.

If you know any families who purchased property in this area in the 1910s and 1920s, please consider contacting Laura Furman, Curator of Collections at laura.furman@midwayvillage.com. or the *Pappagallo* at odoyle584@gmail.com.

Speakers highlight Italian Heritage Month at Ethnic Heritage Museum

In celebration of October as Italian Heritage Month, the Ethnic Heritage Museum has scheduled three guest speakers, each of whom will share their cultural experiences and insights that shaped and influenced their lives. Topics range from food and travel to art and genealogy and visitors will have the opportunity to gain insights into the Italian culture. All events take place on Sunday afternoons.

Rose Mary Leggio, travel specialist and owner of Cucina di Rosa Italian restaurant will appear on Sunday, October 16, from 1 to 4 p.m. Rose has arranged several tours of Sicily for local travelers.

Local artist and author Karla Clark will appear on Sunday, October 23, from 1 to 4 p.m. Karla has written nine books – five children's picture books, three novels and a book of short stories. She also creates paper collages in her art studio.

Italian genealogist specialist Steve Salvato will be available to help individuals on their searches for family roots on October 30, from 1 to 4 p.m. Steve has hundreds of thousands of family names in his data base and his research has included walking graveyards in Sicily.

The Ethnic Heritage Museum is located at 1129 South Main Street, Rockford, Illinois, 61101. For information, call 815-962-7402.

Amici Italiani Adult, Youth dancers performed at 2022 *Festa Italiana*

By Bea Ricotta and Pauline Urso

Amici Italiani (Italian friends) has two goals – to have fun and to preserve and share the Italian culture by educating and entertaining audiences with the color and warmth of the rich Italian heritage of its members. The original dance troupe was founded in 1985 by Shirley Martignoni Fideli to share the rich traditions of Italian folk dancing.

For the Adult Troupe, detail to authenticity is maintained by director Bea Giammarese Ricotta and co-instructors Stephanie Ricotta Kiebles and Johnny Fandel. Dances performed are researched through the Italian Folk Art Federation of America, Inc., in which *Amici Italiani* has active membership.

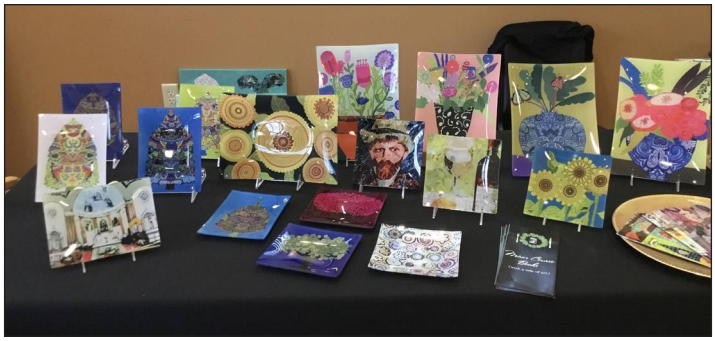
After being unable to dance for 18 months because of COVID-19, the troupe performed 17 dances during an hour-long performance at the 2021 *Festa Italiana*. This was after just two months of practice. They danced Friday and Saturday at the 2022 *Festa Italian*a.

Anyone interested in joining the *Amici Italiani* Dance Troupe of Rockford or hiring them to perform at an event, call Bea at 815-520-1010.

The first steps to become a dancer in the *Amici Italiani* Adult Dance Troupe are often taken with the Youth Troupe. Led by Pauline Urso and Anna Mirabile, the group was created by Lisa Fedeli Hughes and Carla Cacciatore Mullin in 1989 and continues the tradition of preserving our traditional ethnic dances. Over the years, the directors/instructors have been dedicated volunteers who have been trained and educated in the Italian cultural history; many are former Adult Troupe members. These directors have included Shirley Martignoni Fedeli, Maria Galluzzo Pepitone, Rosa Galluzzo Bilardo, Jennifer Rossato and Heather Addotta-Dunaway.

If your son or daughter are 6- to 13-years-old, has an Italian family background and would like to join the troupe, please call Pauline at 815-218-0063 for information.

Photo highlights from Fall 2021 events



At left is an array of works by Italian-American artists Lisa Trapani Frost, Angie Scordato and John Naretta at the Art Scene exhibit April 22-23 at the Ethnic Heritage Museum. At right is Your Killing Me Smalls, the winning team of the 2022 N & JT Charity Couples Bocce Tournament June 18 at the St. Ambrogio Club. From left are Melanie Wingo, Tamara Wallem, Greg Wallem and Mike Wingo.









Three Rockford churches held St. Joseph Altars in March 2022. From St. Bernadette Church at upper left is the altar and the Holy Family representatives. At upper right, two volunteers help dish the Pasta con Sarde. At left is the array of desserts at St. Bridget Church. At right are organizers Rose Scalise Sheridan and Laura Padron. At bottom left, kitchen workers at St. Anthony of Padua's take a break. From left, they are Jim Thompson, Steve Flosi, Frank Valentine, Nino Castronovo, and his son Jonathan. At bottom right is the altar, constructed under the St. Joseph statue.









(At right) The 2022 Festa Italian gets its annual start with the Opening Ceremonies, featuring the anthems of the United States and Italy and greetings and good wishes from organizers and civic leaders.

Greater Rockford Italian American Association – GRIAA
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Corky Corirossi (left), co-founder of Festa Italiana, is recognized by former Festa chair Paul Maffioli at 2022 Opening Ceremonies. More stories, photos inside

PAPPAGALLO

GRIAA Greater Rockford ITALIAN American Association

Fall 2022 Calendar

October 9 – GRIAA Hall of Fame Banquet, 6:30 p.m., Verdi Club

October 9 – Columbus Day Mass, 10:30 a.m. and celebration of GRIAA honorees following in the Memory Garden, St. Anthony of Padua Church

October 16 – Travel specialist and Cucina di Rosa owner Rose Mary Leggio presentation 1-4 p.m., Ethnic Heritage Museum

October 23 – Local writer and artist Karla Clark presentation, 1-4 p.m., Ethnic Heritage Museum

October 30 – Family genealogy workshop conducted by Steve Salvato, 1-4 p.m., Ethnic Heritage Museum

November 6 – RISCA Taste of Italy, noon, Venetian Club

We want to hear from you. Contact us

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