

PAPPAGALLO



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Celebrating the Four Italian Social Clubs

*100-year anniversary for
St. Ambrogio, Verdi clubs*

By Mike Doyle

East side, west side. Those are the sides of town where you will find the last four remaining Italian social clubs in Rockford. At one time, there were more than a dozen clubs organized for the early immigrants to Rockford from places all over Italy.

Gone, but not forgotten, are the Aragona Club, Columbus Club, Neapolitan Club, PDG Club, Roman Club, St. Mary's Society, St. Joseph's Society, the Society of St. Francis DePaul, and the Sacred Heart Society. Two of the active clubs are located on the east side of town with property along the Rock River. The American Lombardi Club and Verdi Club, both located on North Madison Street, were where the first immigrants settled. As our ancestors outgrew this narrow geographic strip, the population moved to South Rockford where the St. Ambrogio Society and the Venetian Club were established. While both are located on the west side, St. Ambrogio remains a fixture in South Rockford, while the Venetian moved to its location in the northwest part of town in 1996.

Two of the clubs, St. Ambrogio and Verdi, are celebrating their 100th anniversaries in 2018. The other two have already passed the century mark.

They are tangible, living memorials to the first Italians who came to America in search of better lives. They came from five regions of Italy; some alone, some with their wives, husbands, children and other family members. While many of their ancestors can trace their first footsteps at Ellis Island or, its predecessor Castle Garden, in New York City, others landed in New Orleans, Boston, and Galveston, Texas.

They were Italians and, for all, it was the greatest adventure of their lives. The first Italian family in Rockford was the Maffioli Family – Giacomo, Henry, Peter, Charles, and Louis – who arrived in 1878. Soon Sam Marelli, a friend from the old country joined them. And when word spread of the opportunities for honest, hard-working men, many others followed. Many, many others.

By 1910, there were more than 250 families of Italian ancestry living in Rockford. Not surprisingly, that was the year the first Italian social club was organized locally. Immigrants from



Two sides of a badge worn by members of the St. Mary's Society in photos provided by Midway Village Museum. The photo at left was worn at funeral services of a member who had passed away. More about the badge and local Italian social clubs on Page 5.

three provinces in the northeastern tip of Italy around Venice established the Venetian Club. First meeting in private homes, in 1926 they eventually built the Venetian Club at 832 Sanford Street. After 70 years in South Rockford, it moved to its present location at 2180 Elmwood Road and celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2010.

Those first to arrive found that living near others from the same provinces in Italy helped. They were comforted in the knowledge that there were familiar faces around them as well as language and customs. The first to emigrate from Italy settled in the narrow neighborhood strip along Madison Street on the east side. The next social club was created for immigrants from the Lombardy region in northern Italy. The Lombardi Club dates to 1915 at 205 Olive Street, a block off Madison.

Also moving into homes and apartments along North Madison Street were immigrants from the province of Tuscany. They eventually started their own club in 1918 – the Verdi Club. Its hall is located at 782 North Madison Street, and club members have been celebrating its 100th anniversary all year.

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GRIAA Announces Honorees

Two women and one well known Rockford business will receive honors at the annual GRIAA Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Award Dinner, October 13, at the Venetian Club. Valeri DeCastris and the late Rose Zammuto will be inducted into GRIAA's Hall of Fame. In addition, the Castronovo Bridal Shop will receive GRIAA's Special Recognition Award. Stories and more photos on pages 2, 3 and 6.



Rose Zammuto



Valeri DeCastris



Rose Zammuto, Val DeCastris named to GRIAA Hall of Fame

Legacies of both women deeply rooted in South Rockford

By Mike Doyle

Two women from successive generations with deep roots in local Italian heritage as well as in South Rockford are the newest members of the Greater Rockford Italian Association's Hall of Fame. Valeri DeCastris and Rose Mary Zammuto will be honored for their significant contributions at the GRIAA's Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Awards Dinner on October 13 at the Venetian Club. In addition, each will be honored at the Columbus Day Mass at St. Anthony of Padua Church on October 14 at 11:30 a.m.



Rose Zammuto holds the holy water vessel as Father James Ciaramitaro blesses the St. Joseph Altar in 2016. Rose's devotion to the altar was so strong that she washed the dishes herself when the Holy Family was served at the event.

For Rose, the recognition is posthumous. She passed away on May 12, 2018, at the age of 97. Her daughter Carmela Zammuto said that being selected to the GRIAA Hall of Fame would have had great meaning to her. "She would have been extremely delighted and proud and humbled," Carmela said. "It would have been the honor of a lifetime." Family members will accept the award on her behalf.

For Valeri, being honored is humbling as well. "I have always been behind the scenes, working steadily and persistently getting things done over the long haul," she said. "I am more interested in the outcome of social change than the recognition."

For each, the level of involvement in Rockford's Italian community was set high.

Rose and Peter Zammuto were raised in South Rockford, and although they moved to the northwest side to raise their five children – Rosemarie, Angelo, Carmela, Joseph, and Josephine – all of them attended St. Anthony School and church in South Rockford. "From my earliest memories, I can remember that she was always involved in the community or the church," Carmela said, whose mother was a lifelong member of St. Anthony of Padua Church.

As her children found their own way, Rose became even more active. "She took care of our family, her parents, her in-laws," said Josephine. "That's the kind of thing that you did. She also did things that contributed to the community. And all of that was instilled by her Italian heritage."

Following in the tradition of her ancestors who emigrated from Aragona, Sicily, and brought with them the tradition of the St. Joseph Altar, she made that an important part of her life. "Mom kept the Italian culture as part of the St. Joseph Altar devotion in private homes and at St. Anthony's Church, by leading the nine-day novena in Italian," Carmela said. "She mentored young Italians to continue the St. Joseph Altar Novena tradition, by teaching them the devotional prayers in Italian, sharing the reciting of the Novena with these young women as an 'on-the-job teaching experience.' "

She never missed St. Joseph's Day, even when she would go to the San Francisco area to stay with her son over the winter. "She always planned her return so she could take part in the St. Joseph Altar," Carmela said. "Even when we told her the weather was bad back here, she insisted she had to return in time for the altar. It was like a line you didn't cross."

"Her biggest pride was doing the Novena," Josephine said. "When Father came to bless the altar, she would always go with him and carry the holy water." Rose was able to attend the 2018 altar at St. Anthony Church, less than eight weeks before her death.



Valeri DeCastris and her husband David Beccue in front of the photo of Ferentino, Italy, at the St. Ambrogio Club.

The 40th *Festa Italiana* was held in August and is sponsored by GRIAA, which started as the Columbus Day Committee in 1975. Rose Zammuto was one of the original members of the committee. "Mom coordinated the first Columbus Day Mass and wreath presentation at the Columbus monument in the side garden of the St. Anthony church grounds," Josephine said. In subsequent years, Rose also helped to coordinate the Mass on the Sunday of the *Festa* weekend.

Her involvement with family, faith and traditions was not

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Castronovo's earns Special Recognition honors

By Mike Doyle

Two of Salvatore and Maria Castronovo's children were exceptionally talented musicians – Sam played the violin and Rose played and taught piano. So, it was only natural that the parents wanted Mary Frances to follow in her sibling's musical footsteps. But she had other ideas. She wanted to design fashions and open a dress shop. With \$750 in seed money, the Castronovo Dress Shop opened in 1937 at 323 North Church Street.

Today, 81 years later and a few blocks away, Castronovo Bridal Shop is still in business, owned and operated by Mary Frances' son Nino. Because of the ability of a single mother to run a retail business in a field dominated by men and the dedication and resiliency to keep that business thriving, the Castronovo Bridal Shop, a family-run operation for several decades, has been selected to receive the 2018 Special Recognition Award by the Greater Rockford Italian American Association at its annual Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Dinner at the Venetian Club, Saturday, October 13. In addition, the store will be recognized at the Columbus Day Mass on Sunday, October 14, at St. Anthony of Padua Church at 11:30 a.m.

"Not many people wanted to see a single Italian woman succeed," Nino said. "But she did it with the help of her family. Because of that, we have had a lot of first-, second-, and third-generations come here for their weddings. We hear, 'My mother came here for her wedding dress,' a lot. We've done so many weddings ... not many small businesses can make a go of it for 80 years."

The family has a special attachment to the bridal salon, which is located at 722 North Main Street in a home that was built in the 1870s. The entire Castronovo family lived upstairs from the business and so did Nino when he was adopted in 1959.

Shortly after Mary Frances graduated from high school in 1934, her mother Mary died. Mary wanted Mary Frances to pursue music, but after her mother's passing, she pleaded with her father, who finally gave his blessing to let her pursue her dream. So, she worked in a Rockford garment factory until she saved enough money to attend the Traphagan School of Design in New York.

Following graduation, she worked at Butterick Pattern Company, once the leading maker of paper dress designs, then opened her custom design store, which became a family business. Sam, the violinist, was also a fashion designer who eventually opened a garment factory in San Francisco. Also working were her sister, Lillian, a millinery designer who died in 1954, and Rose.

"Because of the nature of our business, we deal with customers for six months or more," Nino said. "So, we do become friends with them. Our motto is: 'Through these doors pass the finest people in the world ... our customers.'"

And, always, there was attention to detail. "We don't do



Nino Castronovo, son of dress shop founder Mary Frances Castronovo, runs the family business on North Main Street that began in 1937.

businesswoman. "(That) was very unusual," she said. "She was a pioneer at what she did." And she recalled a photo of a large gathering of business owners where she was one of only two women.

All of this is explained by that fact that his mother "was a dynamic individual." In the late 1950s, she went to Palermo to adopt two children – a boy and a girl. "That was her dream," said Nino, her adopted son who was born in Palermo on December 6, 1957.

As it turned out, Mary Frances was able to adopt only him. However, even that was historic. Until then, a single parent could not make a foreign adoption. But with the help of Illinois Sen. Everett Dirksen and local community activist and leader Frank St. Angel, an emergency session of Congress passed the bill. On September 12, 1959, President Dwight Eisenhower signed the bill into law, and 21-month-old Nino Castronovo became a U.S. citizen.

Because the bridal shop was a family business, Nino recalled helping out as a youngster, unpacking boxes of merchandise. "Years ago, my mom asked me what I wanted to do," he said. "I decided to stay in the business."

He went to design school and got degrees in fashion design and fine arts. In time, Nino's aunt and uncle passed away, and on August 1, 2007, he lost his mother, and Nino took over the business. "I like this kind of business where you are able to help people with their wedding," he said. "We get a lot of feedback (and people) tell us we made their day and thank us. It's an honor to be nominated (for this award) because my mom's family started from nothing and made a successful and viable business and helped a lot of people."

shortcuts," Nino said. Seamstress Sina Moses, who worked for Mary Frances for more than 10 years, said, "She was tough. She was particular about you working until you got it right."

Sina also noted that Mary Frances was a successful



Sperlonga is waiting to be explored

By Mary Valentine

Going to Italy on vacation and visiting several tourist destinations is undoubtedly amazing, but the experience is enhanced even more when there are 11 personal native tour guides who open up unimaginable doors of authenticity.

Our host families in Rockford's Sister City Exchange to Ferentino, Italy, in 2017 exposed us to several places that only an Italian locals could. One of my favorites of these places was a gleaming white town off the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea called Sperlonga, located about halfway between Rome and Naples. It is not only known for its strikingly blue sea, but it also has a unique and underrated history that is dying to be more well known.

The Italian name Sperlonga comes from the Latin word



"The Binding of Polyphemus," located in the archaeological museum, celebrates the deeds of Odysseus from "The Odyssey"

Homer's *The Odyssey*.

Researchers believe that these sculptures were built by three famous Rhodian artists, Athenodorus, Agesander, and Polidoro, who also sculpted the *Laocoonte* which is today displayed in the Vatican Museum.

This cave, now empty, is attached to the National Archaeological Museum of Sperlonga, which contains the reconstructed models of the sculptures. We were fortunate enough to have our Italian peers to translate and explain all of the sculptures and other artwork within the museum to us. Afterwards, we enjoyed the beach together and used that time to get to know our Italian peers.

We discovered that Sperlonga holds more than a glistening beach and white-washed Mediterranean style houses. It holds history that became our reality for the day, and it is a place we will always remember as a hidden gem revealed to us by our host families.

One of the students who went on the trip to Ferentino with me recreated the cave how it would have been with the four episodes of *The Odyssey*. She used watercolor to try and capture the beauty of the natural landscape, but also the wonders of the sculptures themselves.

speluncae, which means cave. This cavernous recess is located right off the shore that was built by the Emperor Tiberius during the Roman Empire. However, the cave holds more than a viewer would expect. Placed inside are four marble sculptures containing the four episodes from



The Ancient Roman Sea Grotto of Tiberius opens up to the Tyrrhenian Sea. It was located on the grounds of the villa of Roman Emperor Tiberius



Visitors to the Grotto of Tiberius enjoy the Sperlonga's famous beach

Two famous Italian legends

...not stolen from the Greeks

While Italy has stolen lots of mythology from Greece (e.g. the Roman Gods and Goddesses are basically just renamed Greek Gods and Goddesses), one cannot deny that Italy itself has quite a few fascinating, sometimes funny legends and myths. Here are two of them.

Romulus and Remus

Of course, no article about Italian legends would be complete without mentioning the founding of Rome. Romulus and Remus are twin brothers who were either fathered by the Roman God Mars (who basically is the Greek God of war with a different name, Ares) or Hercules (who is, of course, well known as a Greek hero).

Their mother, Rhea, had beforehand been condemned to become a vestal virgin by her father's brother, so you can imagine that this was quite a scandal at the time. The poor twins were abandoned (taken to a river by the evil Amulius), but fortunately, a female wolf nursed them, and a woodpecker brought them food. Later on, they were taken care of by a farmer couple.

Once they had grown up, they learned about their true heritage and decided that this was all wrong. They managed to kill Amulius, and their mother's father was allowed to return to his throne. Romulus and Remus then founded a new city – today known as Rome. Statues of a she-wolf nursing two twins can be found in various places in Rome.

La Befana

The Befana is some sort of witch, but a good one, that turns up during the night of January 6th. Some say that she might live with Santa Claus, others say she is some sort of spinster, and the church (of course) was not very pleased with that myth and came up with their own explanation, i.e. that she is a spawn of the devil.

The Befana knows which children have been good. Those receive presents during the night she appears, and the kids who have not been so good get a piece of charcoal as a present. Well, better than nothing, right?

Source: Italy101.com

**American Lombardi Society**

Founded - 1915

209 Olive Street

815-964-1281

**St. Ambrogio**

Founded - 1918

8802 Montague St, 815-964-6833

www.saintambrogio.com**Venetian Club**

Founded - 1910

2180 Elmwood Road, 815-282-6037

www.venetianclubofrockford.com**Verdi Club**

Founded - 1918

782 N. Madison St, 815-968-8119

www.rockfordverdiclub.com

So, three of the oldest and surviving clubs have roots in northern Italy. While most local Italian-Americans know that South Rockford had the largest collection of immigrants, most of whom were from Sicily, a number of newcomers from southern Italy settled on the southeast side of Rockford, in an area bordered by 15th Avenue and Seminary Street. Many immigrants from Naples formed the Neapolitan Club at 517 15th Avenue.

The growing population of immigrants from Italy, and especially Sicily, prompted the Catholic diocese to create a church for them. St. Anthony of Padua was established in 1909, and land was purchased at the corner of Kent and Ferguson streets in South Rockford for a church. Father Anthony Marchesano, who came from the northern Sicilian town of Cefalù, tended to the needs of these newcomers. Within 10 years, Father Marchesano had built the Americanization Hall, next to the original church, to provide social outreach programs such as language and citizenship. When the population outgrew the original church, Father Marchesano had it razed and members of the St. Ambrogio Society purchased the Americanization Hall. St. Ambrogio Society was formed for immigrants from Ferentino, located about 40 miles from Rome. In the first week of July, 1929, the hall was moved on log rollers pulled by horses to its current location at 802 Montague Street. It remains the only Italian social club in South Rockford.

Aragona Club – One of the largest collection of immigrants came from Aragona, located in the Province of Agrigento in southwestern Sicily. The club, originally called *La Mondonna della Mercede di Aragona* (Our Lady of Mercy of Aragona), was formed in 1924 and constructed a hall at 320 Kent Street, which still stands. The Aragona Club was one of the original sponsors of the Rockford Peaches AAGPBL team in the 1940s. Although the club disbanded in the early 1970s, its Ladies Auxiliary continued to meet for years afterward.

Columbus Club – Also referred to as the Columbus Italian Athletic Club.

Neapolitan Club – Also called the San Calogero Club, it was formed for natives of Naples, it was located at 517 15th Avenue in a building that still stands today.

PDG Club – The name was *Piana dei Greci*, which translates to the Plains of Greece, this club was formed for people

who came from Sicily but whose original homeland was Albania. Many emigrated from Albania in the 15th century to escape persecution by the Muslim Turks and to help quell a revolt against an Italian leader. Many Albanians first went to Greece, and then to Sicily. Those who formed this club were mainly from the western Sicilian town of Piana degli Albanesi. A building still stands on the former site of the club at the corner of Blake and Winnebago streets.

Roma Club or Roman Benefit Society – It existed into the 1950s and was located at 602-1/2 West State Street.

Sacred Heart Society – This club was church related and open to all Italian immigrants.

St. Joseph's Society – Its full name was St. Joseph Protector of Rocamena Society, it was established by immigrants from Rocamena, which is located in northwestern Sicily south of Palermo. Members met in the second floor of a building at 1028 South Main Street.

St. Mary's Society – One of the most active clubs in its day before it closed, it was known as the *Maria S.S. dell'Udienza* (St. Mary's of the Audience Society). It was created for immigrants from Sambuca, Sicily, and named after its patron saint of St. Mary. The club was located at 1321 South Main Street, just south of Montague Street, and is in use today as a convenience store. The original name can still be seen on the former front entrance.

The Society of St. Francis DePaul – Once located at 805 Elm Street, it served the needs of people who emigrated from the western tip of Sicily and the city of Marsala.

Mystery of name of Italian club solved

The Midway Village Museum received several items relating to Rockford's history from Rich Hartzog, an avid collector and dealer who specialized in tokens, medals, and other small collectibles. One of those items was a badge from an Italian social club whose origin baffled the Collections Department. Thanks to GRIAA member Jasper St. Angel, the mystery was solved. He identified the badge, shown on Page 1, that was worn by members of the St. Mary's Society. Too share more information about local social clubs, please contact the museum at 815-397-9112.



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overlooked. In 2011, she received the Rockford Diocesan Deanery Award for Outstanding Christian Service to St. Anthony of Padua Parish. In 2012, she was selected as the Italian Woman of the Year by the Ethnic Heritage Museum. She contributed artifacts and historical content about the local Italian community as part of Midway Village's "Many Faces, One Community" exhibit.

She was an auxiliary board member of Presence Saint Anne Center, an expert knitter who made scarves and baby blankets for family and friends and regularly knitted hats for newborns in the neo-natal units of OSF Saint Anthony and Mercy Health hospitals, Carmela said. Josephine recalled talking with her mother about her life's work: "She said, 'For a housewife, I really did do a lot of work.' The women of her time contributed in many ways." Shirley Fedeli, a member of the GRIAA Hall of Fame, said, "She truly was a 'walking encyclopedia' of our Italian heritage and Rockford ancestors and many of us learned from her. Retelling the many Italian folk tales to many people to keep our tradition and heritage alive with our next generation."

But Rose and her husband Peter offered even more. "Mom and Dad always wanted us to learn about the diversity of cultures," Josephine said. "They made it a point to travel. They were always proud of how the Italians overcame the challenges of being immigrants. But they also recognized the struggle of other ethnic groups."

While Rose may not attend the HOF dinner, her family knows she will be there in spirit. "I'm sure she knows," Josephine said. "She'll be watching the room from above and will continue to intercede for all of us."

One could say there wouldn't be an organization called GRIAA without Valeri DeCastris. Its predecessor, the Columbus Day Committee, promoted Italian culture and traditions. In the mid-1990s when the committee realized that organization's mission went beyond one noted explorer and one day on the calendar, a rebranding discussion ensued and Valeri had an idea. "I just blurted it out – the Greater Rockford Italian American Association, GRIAA," she said. "And everybody liked it." She has long served on the board and co-chaired a tent at *Festa Italiana*. She wrote GRIAA's slogan "Preserving Our Past – Planning Our Future."

Valeri's induction is unique in that in 2010 her father Valentino (Val Eddy) DeCastris and cousin Frank (Chico) DeCastris received Hall of Fame Special Recognition Awards in Music and Sports, respectively. Also, she and husband David Beccue live in her ancestral south Rockford home that has been in the family nearly a century. She is one of the few honorees to still reside in Rockford's historically Italian enclave.

Before returning to her hometown of Rockford in 1995, Val was a social change advocate and volunteer throughout Illinois. Graduating high school early, she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences and a Master's Degree in Geography and Environmental Resources from Southern Illinois University at

Carbondale, where she worked as a research laboratory manager. She served on boards of non-profit organizations, including Illinois' largest consumer group, the Citizens Utility Board.

She advised the General Assembly on policy matters and initiated a legislative internship in honor of Zeke Giorgi, with whom she worked. She was a state scientist in Springfield, now retired. "Dave and I used to come to *Festa Italiana* every year and I missed Rockford, so we traveled from Springfield to Rockford every other weekend to lovingly restore my grandparents' home where we now live. I knew my skills could help revitalize Rockford."

Once back, she worked tirelessly to do just that and has been involved in many successful projects. She was the first director and is a board member of Southwest Ideas for Today and Tomorrow (SWIFTT), branded South Rockford as "the Ethnic Village," helped plan the Morgan Street Bridge, created Immigrants Park at Cunningham and Winnebago streets and spearheaded the naming of a room in the Montague Branch Library for Frank St. Angel.

She's brought tens of thousands of dollars to South Rockford, receiving a National Make a Difference Day Award, Crusader Clinic Spirit of Caring Award and Park District and local awards.

A member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish like generations before her, she helped obtain a \$10,000 State of Illinois grant for decorative streetlamps around the church, which evolved into the church's award-winning Memory Garden. Valeri helped incorporate Italian culture in Midway Village Museum's Immigration History exhibit.

She is credited with helping to initiate Rockford's 2006 Sister City agreement with Ferentino, Italy. "I couldn't believe Rockford didn't have an Italian Sister City," she said. When her cousin Simone DeCastris visited from Ferentino, they discussed the concept. Family ties with the Giorgi's and then-Mayor Piergianni Fiorletta made celebrating the century-long connection between the cities logical. Nine public officials from Ferentino visited Rockford for a week of festivities and meetings and the partnership was formalized during City Council.

Valeri appreciates the sacrifices of her ancestors in braving a new world with little more than hope and determination and is undaunted by the discrimination she has faced on many levels. "Given the long history of discrimination against Italians and Sicilians... to be recognized by your hometown ethnic group is a tremendous honor," she said. "I had great grandparents, grandparents and extended family that didn't have my opportunities. Some didn't speak English and the women didn't drive or work outside the home. I have been so fortunate to go to college, enjoy a career and be blessed with a rich family heritage in south Rockford and Louisiana. It has been a labor of love to help restore south Rockford where we enjoyed true community. I am proud to help retain those Old-World traditions I fondly remember."



Opera is storytelling in musical form

By Jimmy Sartino

In the Spring 2018 issue of the *Pappagallo*, we took a brief glance at some of the significant Italian personalities and contributions in the development of the greater gift of music. Musical notation and printing, opera, classic Neapolitan music, and the careers of Enrico Caruso and Frank Sinatra were considered.

If music really is a gift, Italians played a huge role in the way that gift has been handed down to the world. This time, let's consider opera. For many, opera may seem like fancy music, only for the elite. Or worst yet, some may decide that it is too boring and never give it any thought or attention at all.

To say that opera is not important to today's music would be like saying that bricks are not important to buildings. Opera seeps into popular consciousness and bleeds into other forms, sound-tracking TV shows, sports anthems, advertisement

commercials, and films. Opera is often used as a shortcut to create a heightened emotional tension at climactic moments.

For example, in the 1994 film *Shawshank Redemption*, I love the scene when the main character Andy momentarily gains access to the prison's PA system and plays a duet from the opera *The Marriage of Figaro* and captivates the entire prison with its music. Moments later in the film, the character Red



Graphic illustration of "The Marriage of Figaro"

says, "I have no idea to this day what those two Italian ladies were singing about ... I'd like to think they were singing about something so beautiful, it can't be expressed in words ... those voices soared higher and farther than anybody in a gray place dares to dream ... For the briefest of moments, every last man in Shawshank felt free."

That line perhaps perfectly sums up the most innocent and pure reflection we can have in the audience of opera. Opera is a staged work that tells a story in one fluid dramatic musical presentation. Truly, opera is the forerunner of today's great musical theatre shows such as those we love from Broadway.

Opera came about as an attempt to recreate, or revive, Greek and Roman dramatic art. During the Renaissance, thirsting minds in Italy and throughout Europe were introduced for the first time to ancient Greek and Latin masterpieces translated into a vernacular language. Europe fell in love with these moving epic stories and plays and sought to recreate them.

Some ancient documents described that these theatrical dramas were set completely to music, and, since Renaissance musicians did not have any type of musical notation from the Greeks or Romans (kudos to Guido D'Arezzo, the inventor of modern musical notation), they had to create the music to accompany these great dramas from scratch. Though opera may

seem old to us today, it was revolutionary in its own time.

The birth of opera is truly one of those beautiful moments in history where certain advancements and desires joined together to create something amazing. The new availability of classical literature, a heightened desire for beauty thanks to the Renaissance, and the ability to print music joined to create the experience that we call opera. And it all began in Italy!

Ancestry search becomes a relative surprise

By Frank Perrecone

For some time, I considered sending my DNA to Ancestry but was hesitant. My concern dealt with privacy issues pertaining to possible misuse of DNA in the future. After consideration, I decided to go forward.

I chose Ancestry only because it's popular, and I believed it had more DNA in its database. First of all, it's relatively inexpensive and very easy to provide the DNA. All you need to do is provide some saliva in a small plastic container provided, shake it, and return it in the provided postage paid box.

When I got my results back, I was amazed, but not at the location where my early ancestors came from. That was fairly predictable because my ancestors on both sides of the family came from towns about 15 miles apart in Sicily. What amazed me is that I have relatives (mostly distant) in the United States. Ancestry lists me as having over 400 fourth cousins or closer in the U.S.

My father, who also submitted DNA, has over 600 fourth cousins or closer. To the best of our knowledge, none of the Perrecone relatives from Lucca or Saporito relatives from Corleone immigrated to America. Now, I know fourth cousins are pretty distant relatives, but Ancestry was able to match my father's DNA to a second cousin (my third cousin) living in the New York City area, Anna.

Her son responded to my private message through the Ancestry system, and I have since been in contact with both of them. We are currently trying to determine our common ancestry, which is probably going to be my father's great-grandparents.

Anna emigrated to the United States in 1972 at age 15. She remembers that a relative of hers from Lucca visited relatives in Rockford (my grandparents) in the 1960s. That relative would have been my father's uncle, Michele Perricone. What is so nice about connecting with Anna through Ancestry is that she stays in contact with her relatives in Lucca.

When I visit Lucca again, I will hopefully meet different relatives. I am happy I decided to go forward with Ancestry. For those of you on the fence, you might be surprised ... either by the locations your ancestors come from or by the number of close and distant relatives you have in this country.



Galleria Borghese one of world's finest small museums

By Mike Doyle

Located in a Roman urban park a short walk from the Spanish Steps, the Galleria Borghese is described as one of the world's finest small museums, showcasing the Baroque works of Bernini, Caravaggio, Raphael, Titian and Rubens. It is so compact that all of the works are viewed in 20 small rooms on two floors, and that its size requires reservations well in advance. Viewing is limited to two hours with 360 reservations per time slot.



(Above) Maiden struggles to break free of Hades' grip in "The Rape of Persephone"

While restrictive, that allows visitors to take their time studying the artistic excellence of Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne* or Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Serpent*.

All are housed in a 17th century villa located in a northeast corner of the stunning Villa Borghese Gardens. All of the greenery and

(Below) Detail of Bernini's realistic style.



structures once belonged to Cardinal Scipione Borghese, a patron of early Baroque art.

Stephanie Spataro Mares of Greendale, Wisconsin, a Rockford native who has traveled extensively in Europe, has a list of her favorite art galleries. "They include the Musee D'Orsay in Paris, the Uffizi and the Academy in Florence, where Michelangelo's *David* is housed, and the Art Institute in Chicago," she said. "But my most favorite is the Galleria Borghese in Rome, and part of it is because I just didn't expect it.

"The paintings were, of course, beautiful, but the Bernini sculptures were transformative. I have never seen marble sculptures so finely carved that I could almost feel the wind going through the cloak of the figures."

After ascending the winding stone stairway to the first floor, you find that most rooms radiate from the entrance hall and are named for a famous work. Perhaps the most stunning of Bernini's sculptures in in Room III, the Room of *Apollo and Daph-*

ne, which depicts as the sun god Apollo is about to catch the nymph Daphne just as she is transformed into a laurel. As her head turns to call to her father to save her, her fingers become leaves and branches, her toes roots, her skin bark as she turns into a tree.

"Frustrated Apollo will end up with a handful of leaves," Rick Steves writes in his travel book on Italy. "Walk slowly around the statue. It's more air than stone."

Dominating Room IV, the Emperor's Hall, is Bernini's *The Rape of Persephone*, created in 1621-22. In the myth, powerful Hades is dragging his abducted bride to the underworld. You can feel the girl's helplessness and vicious dogs snap at her heels. Its amazing detail is clearly visible as Hades powerful hands grasp at the soft flesh of the maiden.

Bernini's version of the Biblical hero *David* is in Room II. Carved in just seven months in 1623, David's muscles are taut as he turns, about to fling his fatal stone at Goliath. The tight-lipped hero is a self-portrait, a realistic portrayal unlike Michelangelo's version, which depicts David's hands larger than life.

The second floor features paintings by Raphael, Correggio and others including the Venetian Titian. Dated to 1515, *Sacred and Profane Love* is a departure from typical versions of romance of the time, best done behind closed doors. This is an allegorical scene painted



Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love"

for a wedding, showing the young bride and an awareness of worldly things, such as love that is more explicit. The figure at right holds a burning lamp of divine love. The bride is richly dressed with jewels at her waist as she clutches flowers.

Some reviews of the Galleria Borghese are critical of its small number of works. However, anyone who has experienced dense crowding of the Louvre, Versailles, or the Vatican Museum, especially the Sistine Chapel, should enjoy this gem.



Ready for battle, "David" grimaces as he prepares to launch the stone at Goliath.



A 'hands-on' lesson in Italian phrases

Con i piedi per terra or Con la testa fra le nuvole?

By Rosaria Mercuri-Ford

Sometimes, short phrases are worth a thousand words; they create an immediate imagery, and everyone knows what we mean. These phrases are usually introduced by a preposition followed by one or two nouns and may contain an adjective. Take the English expressions: "in harm's way," "out of the blue," and "at my wits end." The Italian language has many such phrases, the most colorful of which involve body parts such as feet, legs, mouth, heart, eyes.

Let's look at some fun expressions of this category:

Con la testa sulle spalle (with head firmly on your shoulder), similar to *con i piedi per terra* (with feet well kept on the ground) both refer to being rational, well grounded; however the phrase *Con i piedi di piombo* (with leaden feet) takes on a more negative connotation, meaning slow moving, heavy.

Con la testa fra le nuvole = scatterbrain (literally: with your head in the clouds).

Here is a list of the most recurrent phrases involving a body part:

A mezza bocca = not entirely true, not really meant; *a piena voce* = loud and clear.

Con un fil di voce = faintly pronounced, shilly; *a squarciagola* = in a screaming way, loudly.

Con le mani in mano/a mani vuote = bearing no gifts, but: *con le mani nel sacco* = red handed.

Senza battere ciglio = without even blinking; in *un batter d'occhio* = with the blink of an eye.

A quattr'occhi/ a tu per tu = between you and me; *a brutto muso* = with a

nasty smirk, illminded.

A rotta di collo = dangerously (neck breaking); *in punta di piedi* = cautiously, on your tiptoes.

A sangue freddo = cold bloodedly; *col sangue agli occhi* = with very angry, blood-stained eyes.

Col cuore in gola/a perdi-fiato = with pounding heart or trying to catch your breath.

Col cuore infranto/a pezzi = brokenhearted; *dal profondo del cuore* = from the bottom of the heart.

Con le spalle al muro = being pushed (with your shoulders) onto the wall, incapacitated.

A capofitto = wholeheartedly; fun to notice how Italian prefers the head to the English heart!

Ad occhi chiusi = literally with closed eyes, it means self-assured, without any doubt.

Su due piedi = right there and then; *con due piedi in una scarpa* = walking a very fine line.

A gambe levate = fleeing with legs up in the air, has nothing to do with the well-known short phrase and good luck wish, *in gamba* = awesome, nice!

And to conclude this category, we can walk *a testa alta* = proudly with our head held high, or *Con la coda tra le gambe* = with the tail between our legs, like a scared dog!



Two men conversing in a Palermo street are using their hands as well as some familiar phrases

Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Award Banquet

Saturday, October 13th, 2018

Venetian Club, 2180 Elmwood Rd, Rockford

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



6:00 p.m. Social Hour

(Cash Bar Available)

7:00 p.m. Dinner

*Appetizers, Chicken, Sausage, Meatballs, Pasta
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8:00 p.m. Award Ceremony

\$35
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Please visit www.GRIAA.org for more information or Contact John Falzone @ 815-979-6936

Please join us for the 2018 Columbus Day Mass Sunday, October 14th, 2018

11:30 a.m. at St. Anthony's Church, 1010 Ferguson St., Rockford, IL

All members of the Hall of Fame, inductees and families, are invited to be a part of the entrance procession at Mass. Please arrive at 11:15 a.m.

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2018-19 Fall and Winter Festivals, Holidays in Italy

September (Settembre)

6-9 – Chianti Tuscan Classico Expo, Greve

October (Ottobre)

1-10 – Sabra del Miele (Honey Festival), Sortoni, Sicily

6-November 25 – International White Truffle Fair, Alba (between Turin and Genoa)

12-13 – Verdi Festival at Teatro Regio, Parma

November (Novembre)

1 – All Saints Day

December (Dicembre)

13 & 20 – Festa della Santa Lucia, Agrigento

25 – Christmas Natale

28-January 1 – Umbria Jazz Winter Festival, Orvieto

January (Gennaio)

11-14 – Milano Moda Uomo, historic international fashion fair, Milan

February (Febbraio)

16-March 5 – Carnevale, Venice and many other places



An example of
Sicilian honey

Who was the first Italian immigrant to the New World?

Do you know who was the first Italian to arrive in what is now the United States and when he came? The answer is Albino Lupo, who arrived in 1610, even before the Pilgrims landed on the Mayflower. Lupo settled in Jamestown, Virginia, the first permanent English colony in America.

Born in 1579, Lupo was the son of Peter Lupo, a violinist in the royal court. He became a landowner and was able to bring over his brother Phillip, a goldsmith, and his wife Elizabeth. In 1620, Albino and Elizabeth had a daughter, Temperance, who became the first Italian American.

Albino had no male descendants, but his brother had a son also named Phillip, and his heirs are found throughout the U.S. today. Albino died in 1626, and there is no record of what became of his daughter.

Did an Italian really invent the telephone?

Yes, it's true. On December 23, 1871, inventor Antonio Meucci, an associate of firebrand political leader Giuseppe Garibaldi, could not afford the \$250 patent fee and was forced to register a less costly and less protective caveat with the U.S. Patent Office for his invention of the telephone. When the caveat expired in 1874, the destitute Meucci could not afford the \$10 renewal fee, which allowed Alexander Graham Bell to claim the telephone's propriety two years later.

Differences between restaurants in Italy and the U.S.

In Italy ...

1. You have to pay for water (and either it's bubbly or still)
2. And you won't get ice unless you ask for it.
3. Menus have different courses. In the U.S., a three-course meal is appetizer, entrée, and dessert. In Italy, it's antipasti, primo, secondi, contorna and dessert.
4. Most restaurants offer food typical to their region.
5. Mixed drinks are not very popular.
6. You may get charged for bread. And the charge may be per person whether or not you eat it.
7. Service is slower and much more relaxed.
8. Most restaurants open later, say 7 or 7:30 p.m. (Editor's note: we once went to a restaurant in Rome at 8 p.m. and we were the night's first customers)
9. You won't find many of the "Italian" dishes that you love, such as Fettuccini Alfredo, Chicken Parmesan or Pepperoni Pizza.
10. You usually end your meal with a *digestif*, such as biscotti or limoncello.
11. You don't ask for a doggy bag.
12. You don't ask for substitutions. Take the dish as it comes.
13. Tipping is ... confusing. (If you must tip, 10 percent is acceptable).
14. Finding a place that offers carry-out is becoming more common. But you have to ask "to take."

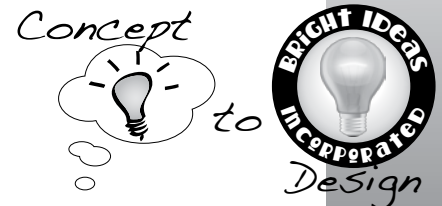
Source: National Italian American Foundation and editor's experience

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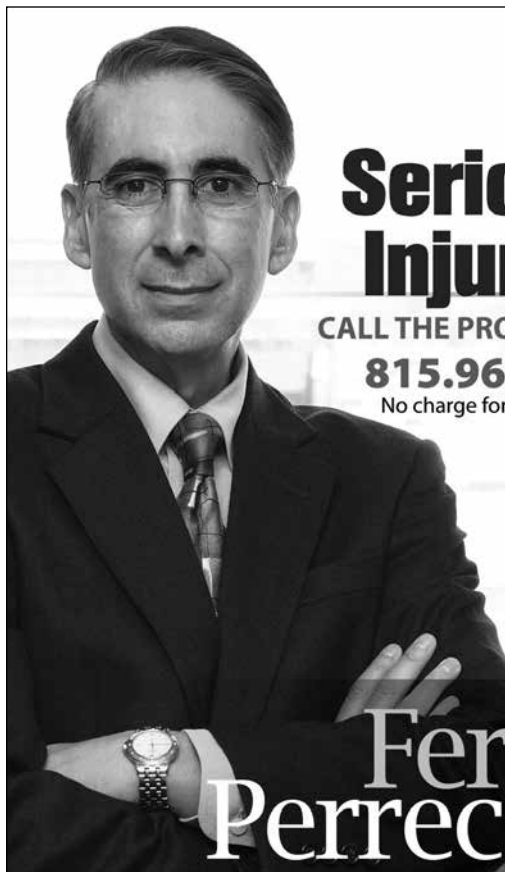
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Italian Recipes

Tuna-Stuffed Tomatoes

This recipe tastes best when you are picking tomatoes fresh from the garden.

- 4 medium-sized tomatoes, cored
- 1 can tuna in oil (undrained)
- 1 tablespoon chopped onion
- 1 stalk celery chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Prepare tuna salad by combining tuna, onion, celery, olive oil and salt and pepper. Core tomatoes by cutting around the top, scraping the interior but keeping the remainder whole. Stuff tuna salad into the tomatoes. Top with chopped chives if desired.

Source: Mike Doyle Boone County Kitchen

Fried Shrimp with Avocado

Gamberi Impanati con Avocado

- 2 pounds jumbo shrimp, peeled, deveined and butterflied
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- Flour for dredging
- 3 eggs beaten
- 1 cup dried bread crumbs
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 avocado
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts

Season the shrimp with salt and pepper, dredge in flour and shake off the excess. Dip in the beaten egg, then coat in bread crumbs. In a large skillet over medium heat, warm ¼ cup of olive oil. Add the shrimp and fry until golden brown on both sides. You can do this in batches. Remove from skillet and drain on paper towels. In a small bowl, whisk together the remaining ¼ cup olive oil and lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. Arrange the fried shrimp on a serving platter. Remove the pit from the avocado, and, using a spoon, scoop the avocado flesh out of the peel. Thinly slice the avocado. Place the avocado slices in the middle of the serving platter and drizzle the vinaigrette over. Scatter the chopped nuts around.

Source: La Cucina Italiana

Grilled Salmon with Key Lime Butter Sauce

- Salmon filet
- 1 clove garlic, chopped finely
- 1 tablespoon Key Lime Juice
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil or sesame oil
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 5-6 fresh mint leaves, chopped finely
- 1 tablespoon flour
- ½ cup milk to start

Grill salmon to your taste (I season it with a splash of olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper).

While salmon is grilling, melt 2 tablespoons butter and mix with Key Lime Juice, oil, garlic, mint, salt and pepper. You can mix by hand or place it in a blender. Then create a roux, placing 1

tablespoon of butter into sauce pan and when melted, add 1 tablespoon flour. Stir constantly over low heat, then add small amounts of milk to thicken. Increase heat to near boiling point and add milk as needed. When reached desired consistency, blend into Key Lime sauce and heat thoroughly. Add sauce to cooked salmon.

Source: Mike Doyle Boone County Kitchen

Chicken Piccata

- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, halved crosswise
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- All-purpose flour, for dredging
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice (from about 2 lemons)
- ¼ cup drained capers, rinsed
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Sprinkle the chicken with the salt and pepper. Dredge the chicken in the flour to coat lightly. In a large sauté pan, melt 2 tablespoons of the butter with the 2 tablespoons of oil over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook until just brown, about 3 minutes per side. Using tongs, transfer the chicken to a plate. Add the broth, lemon juice and capers to the same pan. Bring the broth mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, scraping the brown bits from the bottom of the pan for extra flavor. Return the chicken to the pan and simmer until just cooked through, about 5 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the chicken to a platter. Whisk the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter into the sauce. Pour the sauce over the chicken, garnish with the parsley and serve.

Source: "Everyday Italian" by Giada de Laurentiis

Italian Beef Stew

Umido di Carne

- 3 pounds chuck roast, cut into 1-1/2-inch cubes
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 16-ounce can tomato puree
- ½ cup celery, diced
- 3 sprigs parsley, chopped
- 3 fresh basil leaves, minced
- 6 ounces water
- 3 large potatoes

Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil until translucent. Transfer to Dutch oven. Add meat and brown well, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent burning. Add salt, pepper, tomatoes, celery, parsley, basil and enough water to cover meat. Cover and simmer slowly about 30 minutes. Add potatoes cut Julienne-style (match stick-sized pieces) and continue to simmer slowly another 30 minutes or until meat and potatoes are nice and tender and sauce is thick. Serve hot with Italian garlic bread.

Source: "A Gourmet Trip Thru Italy" by Albert Skaronea



Recipes (cont.)

Neapolitan Honey Pastry *Struffoli*

9 ounces flour
Grated skin of ½ orange and ½ lemon
Dry white wine
1 whole egg and 1 yolk
Pinch of salt
2 ounces butter
4 tablespoons sugar
Honey
3 ½ ounces peeled and coarsely chopped almonds
2 ounces colored, sugar-coated almonds
Extra virgin olive oil

Blend the flour with the eggs, butter, 1 tablespoon sugar, grated citrus peel and salt. Blend thoroughly. Shape the dough into thin rods about the size and shape of a pencil, then cut the rods into pieces about 1/2 -inch long. Fry in hot oil, a few pieces at a time until golden. Drain on paper towels and allow to dry. This is the struffoli. In a saucepan, heat the honey with remaining sugar, adding a bit of water if necessary. Bring to a boil. Add the almonds and fried struffoli, stirring until they are covered with the honey mixture. Turn the mixture onto a greased plate. Dip your hands in cold water and shape the mixture into the form of a large cone or donut. Sprinkle the top with sugar-coated almonds.

(This can stay fresh for at least a week). *Source: Italy, Italy magazine*

The History of Pesto Sauce

The traditional and most basic of the pesto sauces was invented in Genoa for sailors who had been on long sea voyages and, upon return, requested the foods and flavors they missed the most. And foremost of their desires was for the wonderful aroma of deep green basil that grew well in the country air of Liguria. To please these Genoese sailors, dedicated cooks took great care in the preparation of their beloved "pesto," the flavorful sauce of basil, garlic, pine nuts and parmesan cheese, served over pasta or added to soup.

Basil Pesto

2 cups packed fresh basil leaves
¼ cup toasted pine nuts
1 garlic clove
½ teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper,
plus more to taste
About 2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese



To toast the pine nuts, bake them on a cookie sheet at 400 degrees for 5-10 minutes, stirring occasionally. (Do not let them burn). In a blender, pulse the basil, pine nuts, garlic, ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper until finely chopped. With the blender still running, gradually add enough olive oil to form a smooth and thick consistency. Transfer the pesto to a medium bowl and stir in the cheese. Season the pesto with more salt and pepper to taste. Cover and refrigerate. The pesto can be made 2 days ahead.

Source: Everyday Italian by Giana de Laurentiis

Sicilian Poetry

My Sicily

I love you: my Sicilian beaches
Your smell of orange blossoms and of clamint
The fertile fields of Sicily,
The rustic houses and the simple peasants.

The castles built between the hills and dales,
Cherished dear memories of ancient times,
The sweetness of our native words uttered
By all of our young women through their eyes.

The smile of the sky that rains on us
Bringing us comfort for our tired fantasy
Carrying love and goodness everywhere.

This is the land of my sweet Sicily,
Mother to artists worthy of remembrance,
Fount of perennial poetry.

Sicilia Mia

*Benvi vi vogghiu spiaggi sicilani,
odurusi di zagra e nipitedda,
campi fucinni di Sicilia bedda,
rustichi casi e simplici viddani.*

*Sparsa tra munti e vaddi li castedda
cari ricordi d'epuchi luntani,
dicizza di vucabili nustrani
ditti, cu l'occhi, d'ogni picciuttedda.*

*E surrisu di celu ca spanni
cunortu in ogni stanca fantasia
purtannu amuri e beni a tutti banni.*

*Chista e la terra di Sicilia mia,
Matri di granni artisti minuranni,
e funti di pirenni puisia?*

Peppini Denaro (1886-1972)

Editor's notebook

The *Pappagallo* editors would like to thank readers who made donations to defray the costs of publishing and mailing future issues. To date, more than 200 people have submitted donations, including these since the last issue: Carol Brusca-to-Shoulders, Judy Cacci Dempsey, Gene Shirley Fedeli, Bruce and Nancy Hand, Rosie Scalise Sheridan, Donna Vuttera.

We hope that you continue to enjoy the *Pappagallo*. We love to hear from our readers, so if you have any ideas or suggestions, please pass them along. Also, if you would rather receive the *Pappagallo* via email rather than having it mailed to your home, please let us know. You can contact us at P.O. Box 2041 Loves Park IL 61130. *Grazie!* Your editors, Mike Doyle, editor Frank Perrecone, assistant editor



Heritage Museum honors Val Mioni, schedules genealogy expert appearance

A surprise 90th birthday party for Velia "Val" Mioni on Sunday, July 29, 2018, at the Ethnic Heritage Museum turned out to be an even bigger celebration. That's because Val was honored as the Italian Gallery Woman of the Year.

Val has been active in serving Rockford's Italian-American community. She has volunteered at the St. Joseph Altar at St. Anthony of Padua Church, been a member and officer of the Venetian Club Auxiliary for more than 50 years, and played in active part in helping with the Italian Gallery, including handling memberships for the museum.



Val Mioni, EHM Italian Gallery Woman of the Year

Val's parents Maddalena (DePretto) and Guiseppe (Joseph) Girardin came to America from Piovene Rocchette, Veneto Region, Italy. She was born on July 31, 1928, and on September 23, 1950, she married Bruno Mioni. Val and Bruno had two children – Katherine and Joseph. Katherine married Michael Baez in 1981 and have two sons – Marc and Michael. Joseph married Josephine Basile in 1979 and have four children – Joseph Jr., Nicole, Katherine, and Madeline - and one grandchild.

In other museum news, 2016 GRIAA Hall of Fame inductee Steve Salvato will be at the museum on Sunday, October 14, from 2-4 p.m., to help people with their family histories at no cost. Salvato is the leading genealogist for Italian Americans in the area and has more than 150,000 names on his data base.

Sister Cities' Taste of Italy

Chefs from several Rockford Italian restaurants will providing samples of their specialties on Sunday, November 4, when the Rockford Italian Sister Cities Alliances holds its annual fund-raiser, A Taste of Italy IV, at the Venetian Club. Tasting will run from noon to 2 p.m.



RISCA members at the 2017 Taste of Italy

Among the restaurants scheduled to attend are the host Venetian Club, Bravo Pizza, Cucina di Rosa, DiTullio's, Franchesco's, Gerry's Pizza, Napoli's Loves Park, and the St. Ambrogio Club, the founding organization of the Sister Cities program. St. Ambrogio was founded by immigrants from Ferentino, Italy, and proceeds from the event will be used to sponsor high school students from there who will visit Rockford in 2019. Eleven Boylan High School students visited Ferentino in July, 2017, as part of the program's student exchange.

In addition to the variety of Italian dishes, there will be entertainment by the Cannoli Rockateers and a cash bar. The cost is \$25 per person and only 200 tickets are available.

For information or to order tickets, contact event chair at dinagetty@yahoo.com. RISCA is a non-profit organization run solely by volunteers. More information is available at the group's website, ourrisca.org or find it on Facebook at Rockford Italian Sister Cities Alliance – RISCA.

Family histories sought for GRIAA immigration book

By Frank Perrecone

Many Rockford area Italian-Americans who intended to submit a family immigration history for inclusion in GRIAA's book, *Immigration Histories of Rockford Italian Families*, procrastinated too long and missed the deadline. In order to accommodate those who want their family's immigration history published, Mike Doyle and I will be collecting and editing immigration histories for inclusion in a second edition of the book. We expect the second edition to debut at *Festa Italiana* 2019 which means we will need family histories by May 30, 2019.

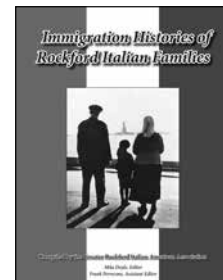
To submit a family history and up to two photographs, please follow the below directions:

- 1) The immigration history word limitation is eight hundred fifty words.
- 2) The history must be typed and sent via email in Word format.
- 3) We will publish up to two photographs. Photographs must be sent in jpeg format.
- 4) Below the last paragraph of your history, describe who is depicted in each photograph and the year or approximate year the photograph was taken. Words for photograph captions will not be counted against the eight hundred fifty-word limit.
- 5) The last paragraph of your history should end as follows: Submitted by (name), on (date), for the Genealogy Project for the Culture and Education Committee of GRIAA *Immigration Histories of Rockford Italian Families*. The name of the author and date must be included.
- 6) Send history and photographs to me at frankaperrecone@aol.com. (Again Word and jpeg formats). Please ask for confirmation.
- 7) In your email, please include your name, telephone number and address.

After writing the immigration history and caption for the photographs, please proof read carefully. We will edit for grammar, spelling and consistency. I would suggest you reread your history several times over the course of a few days before you send it. Once sent, changes to submitted histories will not be accepted. To help you organize your thoughts, you will find a "Family History Form" located at griaa.org. Click the Culture and Education link and scroll down. You will also find several links to histories published in the book.

Remember, if your family history is not included in the second edition of *Immigration Histories of Rockford Italian Families*, it is because no one submitted the information to us.

If you have questions, please contact me at frankaperrecone@aol.com or 815/962-2700





'She said Yes!' at the Festa



After the final dance by the *Amici Italiani* Adult Dance Troupe at the 2018 *Festa Italiana*, on August 5th, Mitchell Lubke got down on a knee and proposed to fellow dancer Ellie Addotta. As you can see, she said "Yes!"

This event was one of the highlights of the 40th annual event, sponsored by GRIAA. It was well attended and featured several new food items, including a strawberry shortcake *sfinigi*, *cannoli* cupcakes and pork chops with garlic and mint sauce.

The adult and youth *Amici Italiani* dance troupes are always seeking new members. If interested, contact Rosie Scalise Sheridan (815-966-4779) or Bea Ricotta (815-520-1010) for adults, and Pauline Urso (815-218-0063) for youth, ages 6- to 13-years-old. You may not find romance or get a proposal, but you will have a good time.



Bob (Corky) Corirossi receives an commorative award from GRIAA co-chair Karen Cantele for his years of dedication to the *Festa Italiana*. He was co-chairman of the first event in 1978.

John Falzone, another long-time contributor and former chairman, gets a congratulatory kiss from Cantele as he receives his award.

Like Corky, he is a member of GRIAA's Hall of Fame.



Bishop David Malloy of the Rockford Diocese says Mass on the grounds of the *Festa Italiana* on Sunday morning, August 5. Deacon Peter Addotta of St. Anthony Church is at left.

Photo highlights of St. Joseph Altar



Carl Ambruoso stands before the beautifully adorned St. Joseph Altar at St. Anthony of Padua Church on March 18, 2018.



Some of the freshly made *pignolati* for the St. Joseph Altar.



Two volunteers of the dozens that helped make the St. Joseph Altar a success.



Plates of *Pasta con Sarde* are dished out for the faithful who enjoy the Feast of St. Joseph.

Greater Rockford Italian American Association – GRIAA

PAPPAGALLO

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*Bernini's masterpiece
"Apollo and Daphne"
is an example of art at
the Galleria Borghese
in Rome. Story, more
photos on Page 8.*

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2018-19 Calendar Items

October

13 – 2018 GRIAA Hall of Fame and Special Recognition Dinner, 6 p.m., Venetian Club

14 – Columbus Day Mass at 11:30 a.m. and Celebration following in the Memory Garden, St. Anthony of Padua Church

November

4 – Rockford Italian Sister Cities Alliance Taste of Italy IV, Venetian Club, noon-2 p.m.

December

8-9 – Santa Lucia Celebration, all Masses, St. Anthony of Padua Church

March

16 – Blessing of St. Joseph Altar, St. Anthony Church, following 4:30 p.m. Mass

17 – St. Joseph Altar, St. Anthony Church, noon- 3 p.m.

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We want to hear from you. To contact us:

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John & Kathy Falzone Benny & Kerry Falzone