



# NEWSLETTER

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Sep/Oct 2021

## Mission Statement

Our mission is to promote, preserve and provide education about all aspects of the rich Italian-American culture to the Des Moines metropolitan area and the State of Iowa.

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## A Message From The President

by Paolo Bartesaghi

*Ciao a tutti!*

Hello to you all!

I hope you all have had an enjoyable summer and are returning to the normality of daily lives, whether you were away on vacation, visiting family, or just taking it easy and trying to stay cool in the Iowa heat.

I know that credit cards play an integral role in our daily lives, and I began to think about the time when credit cards didn't even exist. It wasn't really that long ago, either, when most people had only the option of paying with cash for anything and everything.

Years ago, the wife of the family would stay home and be a homemaker and mother. One of her many duties was to get the shopping done. She would walk around the city or town with her netted bag and gather fruits and vegetables from the local market, cheese and milk from the cheese shop, flour and bread and pastries from the bakery, and any soaps and medicines from the pharmacy.



Inside her purse was a black book closed with a flat rubber band. The woman would present this book to each merchant who would write down what was purchased and how much the items cost. The merchant would then copy what was written into his own journal as a point of sale. No money was exchanged. As she went from shop to shop, the pages would fill up with her various purchases until her shopping experience was complete.

At the end of the week, or at the end of the month, each merchant was paid in full the amount due for the products purchased during that time. The merchant would then draw a diagonal line across his list, meaning that the purchase had been paid in full.

This method of purchasing/payment was the precursor to the "credit card" that is used today. Not everyone had the luxury of the special "black book" and one had to earn the merchant's trust before it could be used. Having this "black book" was also a way for the wife to feel esteemed by her fellow citizens and the merchants in her community.



continued on page 4



## We Reflect & Remember

Gene "Gino" Foggia  
Sue Rezek  
Rose Giarrusso  
Sr. Ramona Kaalberg, CHM  
Lorene Stefani  
Rocky Carlton Gabriel  
Mary Frances Tonini  
Marquita Quijano Schmitz  
Joseph Palmer

Find more information about our events at [www.iaccofia.org](http://www.iaccofia.org), facebook and Eventbrite

### Friends of The Center

Society of Italian Americans  
[www.siadm.com](http://www.siadm.com)

Societa' Vittoria Italiana  
[www.vittorialodge.com](http://www.vittorialodge.com)

Italian-American Women of IA  
[www.italianamericanwomenofiowa.com](http://www.italianamericanwomenofiowa.com)

Italian Folk Dancers

### Grant Supporters



## Upcomming Classes & Events

Sep 8



### A Divine Walk With Dante

Let us be your guide as we present to you a unique fundraising experience, where you will enjoy the cuisine of three of Des Moines' finest Italian restaurants. You will journey to Hell (Inferno) at Baratta's for your appetizers, to Purgatory (Purgatorio) at Lucca for your main course and, finally, Heaven (Paradiso) at La Mei Bakery for your dessert.

Sep 18



### Limencello Making

Gather with us as we familiarize you with the technique for delicious, home-made limoncello! Share a limoncello cocktail and dessert with friends and new acquaintances.

Oct 9



### Italian Genealogy - Finding Your Roots

Do you want to learn more about your Italian American family? This class will cover what local, state, US and Italian records are available for your Italian American family and how to find them. Instructors Kathy Foggia and Jari Chiodo Sinnwell will lead the class.

Oct 10



### Columbus Day Dinner

Our annual dinner and Outstanding Citizen Recognition will be held at the Vittoria Lodge.

Oct 11

### Columbus Day Memorial Observance

Our annual procession will begin in the southeast parking lot at 10:45AM.

Nov 13



### The Art of Making Ravioli

From making the dough, creating the filling, rolling and shaping the ravioli, cooking, serving and eating! Participants will learn all of the steps in the ravioli process, plus take home 2 dozen!

If you have a special request for an event or class, please contact our event chairperson at [Bartasaghi@iaccofia.org](mailto:Bartasaghi@iaccofia.org)

Tickets and additional information can be found on our web site at [www.iaccofia.org](http://www.iaccofia.org)

## *Se stiamo assieme, possiamo farcela. If we work together, we can do it.*

Dear Friends, We are excited to tell you that our 2021-2022 Capital Campaign is off to a great start! In only 8 months, we have raised over 70% of the money that is needed to pay-off the purchase contract for the Butler Mansion! With more pledges to come in, we will not only fulfill our contract, but be able to set up an endowment that will enable the Center to sustain its' many venues.

We are working with State, City, County and Federal agencies who have hopped on board to help bring this project to fruition. We have also obtained backing from several local organizations, such as the Greater Des Moines Partnership, The Community Foundation, BRAVO, and Prairie Meadows. And, Individuals who have stepped-up to volunteer their time and hard work. The commitment is overwhelming!

At this time, we have completed a full evaluation of the building both structurally and operationally. RDG Architects are donating their services to map out enhancements to the various rooms to ensure we utilize the space to the utmost. Baker Mechanical and Weitz Construction are assisting with roof and air-conditioning repairs. Several individuals have already pledged their time and expertise to serve on a Management Board to ensure that this endeavor lives up to all our expectations.

The Cultural Center Board is working hard to ensure that all the cultural events of the past continue. The museum will host a variety of displays with treasured items donated from our friends. The library will be expanded for a genealogy center for family research. An educational center will be established to teach children about our Italian heritage.

We will keep you updated as this project moves towards its' Grand Opening in 2022.

### Campaign Committee:

Paul Bognanno - Pat Schneider - Luca Berrone - Loretta Sieman - Paolo Bartesaghi, President - Susan DeFazio, Treasurer

## **We the Italians**

The Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa has proudly accepted an offer to represent the State of Iowa in the **We The Italians** community, a fast-growing network of Italians around the world. Please read about this fine organization below and visit their web site at [www.wetheitalians.com](http://www.wetheitalians.com).



*We The Italians is a bridge over the Atlantic Ocean, linking Italian excellence with a tribute to American exceptionalism and the symbolic phrase of their constitution: "We the People". Every time Italy joins forces with America, the result is a winner. Years of integration have proven that the Italian genius with creativity and attitude to hard work finds an extraordinary and unparalleled additive in the meritocratic and business friendly environment of the United States.*

The American community of the Italians of new emigration, the Americans of Italian origin who are the heirs of those who left Italy, those who arrived after World War II, those who still today are living witnesses of the diaspora at the turn of the last two centuries: all those who belong to one of these categories have in common the fact that they love Italy and the United States. These communities have not had in the past an online platform that would allow them to enrich, promote, deepen, satisfy or share this passion and belonging to the two countries. **We The Italians** has created such a network.

**We The Italians** is currently represented in 31 of the 50 U.S. states and in 13 Italian regions, a number that is constantly growing. We also have a number of partnerships with leading companies and associations in the field of promotion of Italian culture, study travel to and from the United States, and Italian citizenship services. The goal is to continue to grow day by day as the online platform where to find, share, learn, buy, know everything Italian in the USA, and the many beautiful aspects of Italy.

We the Italians - Via del Babuino 51 - 00187 Roma, Italia - [www.wetheitalians.com](http://www.wetheitalians.com) - [info@wetheitalians.com](mailto:info@wetheitalians.com)



One of the items that was frequently on the shopping list was cheese, a traditional and common food for the Italian table. I would like to dedicate the remainder of my article to information on the production of one specific cheese: gorgonzola.

Lombardy and Piedmont are the only two regions in Italy where this cheese can be made. There are only 29 dairies in the world that can make this cheese. The gorgonzola industry is worth over \$800 million. Almost 5 million wheels of gorgonzola cheese are produced each year.



Gorgonzola cheese has a centuries-old history, and it is still made today using the same ingredients and techniques that were used decades ago. The beautifully marbled interior is produced by *Penicillium roqueforti*, a fungus that is used to ripen the cheese. The fungus produces unique blue or blue/green veins. This is how blue cheese gets its name.

Gorgonzola cheese was born in the Valsassina area, a region in the Alps northeast of Milan. One story is that Gorgonzola was first started with the Bergamini families who were shepherds that took cows, not sheep, to pasture. This family turned the cows' milk into cheese, and left it to age in natural caves. The natural mold turned the cheese into the beautiful blue cheese that we recognize now. Later, all the Gorgonzola producers moved south to the Po Valley for economic reasons when the market for the cheese became larger. Gorgonzola cheese is made from unskimmed, pasteurized cow's milk. It can either be mild and creamy or hard and pungent, depending on how long it is left to age.



The two kinds are easily distinguishable by the color of their veins, blue in the creamy kind and green in the pungent kind. Gorgonzola, and all blue cheeses in general, are special cheeses since they are neither classified as soft nor hard, but both. In addition, there is the blue mold, the *Penicillium roqueforti* that adds flavor and other differences. This cheese has a lot of structures, also visually. Visually it is a beautiful cheese. *Penicillium roqueforti* is added to the cheese at the very beginning of the production process in a large cauldron, together with enzymes, rennet, and yeasts. In about 20 minutes, the milk becomes curd and can be transferred into molds. Each wheel is marked with the dairy's identification number. In any

given dairy, between 450 and 500 Gorgonzola wheels are made each day. To help the curd settle, wheels are turned four times, then left to rest overnight. They are then salted a couple of times. At this stage they weigh about 40 pounds, but this will drop to about 26 pounds at the end of the aging process due to the releasing of excess whey. The salting rooms are warm and humid, which favors the activity of yeasts inside the cheese.

Mild Gorgonzola wheels stay there for three days and hard Gorgonzola for five days. Then they are moved to a cold room where they are punctured 100 times on each side (in many dairies by hand even today). This allows oxygen into the cheese for it to grow its signature blue veins. After this step, the cheese is left alone to age. It takes two months for the blue creamy Gorgonzola cheese and three months for the green pungent one. The color difference is quite evident, but the taste is even more so.

Gorgonzola cheese is protected by the European Union by the Protected Designation of Origin Scheme. This means that any cheese labeled "Gorgonzola" must meet a particular set of standards and is subject to quality checks. It is also wrapped in a signature aluminum foil. Each dairy must be within the designated area of Lombardy or Piedmont. Generally, this area is confined between the cities of Novara and Bergamo. The milk used must be from this area. Each dairy has its own identification number and must be certified to produce Gorgonzola and must respect all the standards, including the timings and aging process, and must wrap the final product in its signature foil.



I hope you found this travel back in time to be enjoyable and educational. I will be explaining the production of other Italian cheeses in future articles. Thank you, as always, for your continued support of the Italian American Cultural Center as we spread Italian Culture throughout the community.



## October Is Italian Heritage Month A Time To Reflect and Remember

by Patricia Civitate

The observance of Italian Heritage month presents readers the opportunity to look into the past and celebrate those adventurous Italian pioneers who traveled across the ocean to help shape the North American continent. According to a book entitled *Four Centuries of Italian American History* by Giovanni Schiavo, the first to be recognized was Cristoforo Colombo (Genova). According to Schiavo, on October 12, 1492, Colombo landed on Watling Island in the Bahamas. It was there that he knelt down, thanked the Lord and planted the royal standard of Spain. In 1497-98, Amerigo Vespucci (Firenze) made his first trans-Atlantic voyage. The continent of North America was ultimately given his name. Other Italians to follow close behind were Sebastiano Cabot (Venezia) and explorer Giovanni Verrazano. Several Italian missionaries also ventured into the unknown territory.

In honor of this month, several activities are offered at the Center:

### Italian Genealogy - Finding Your Roots

A great way to celebrate Italian Heritage month is to research family members that emigrated from Italy to start a new life in America. Why did they leave Italy? How did they end up in Iowa? How did they get here if they didn't speak English? How did they find a job or a place to live? If you have ever wondered about any of these things, or wanted to find out more information about your Italian ancestors, it can be done easily in most cases. Some of you could be quite advanced in your family genealogy, but some of you might just be starting out and want to know how to begin.



Saturday, October 9th from 1-2:30, The Italian-American Cultural Center is offering a class on Italian Genealogy - Finding Your Roots. Whether you are just beginning your family research or have been working on it for years, this class will have some tips for you. The class is free. You can sign up at [www.iaccofia.org](http://www.iaccofia.org) under Classes and Events. Instructors are Kathy Foggia and Jari Chiodo Sinnwell. Any questions, you can contact [foggia@iaccofia.org](mailto:foggia@iaccofia.org)

### Columbus Day Dinner

The annual Columbus Day Dinner will be held at the Societa Vittoria Italiana Lodge on Sunday, October 10th. Doors open at 4:30 pm and dinner will be served at 5:00 pm. Cost of the dinner is \$50 per person. Tickets will be available on our web site at [www.iaccofia.org](http://www.iaccofia.org), [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com) or the September meetings of the Society of Italian-Americans, Vittoria Lodge and Auxiliary, the Italian American Women of Iowa and the Gruppo Il Trattenimento Italiano folk dancers. Event Chair is Randy Prati. Presentation of the Outstanding Citizen Award(s) will take place during the program of this event.

# CELEBRATE

*with us*

## Columbus Day Dinner

Sunday, October 10th  
5:00PM \$50pp  
Doors open at 4:30PM

### 45th Annual Memorial Observance

The 45th Annual Columbus Day Memorial observance will take place at 11:00 am on Monday, October 11th, at the Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa, 2633 Fleur Drive. Those attending who would like to participate in the procession should meet in the southeast parking lot at 10:45 am and process as a group to the flag area for the singing of the United States and Italian national anthems. Those in attendance will then proceed to the north entrance of the facility, and on through to the courtyard for the remainder of the program and refreshments.

## Cooking at the Cultural Center

*by Mark Pritchard*

The morning of July 17th at the Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa was filled with chocolate, mascarpone cheese, ladyfingers, and coffee! About 20 people joined in the fun as I demonstrated making Mama Francesca's Tiramisu and Grandma Mildred's Espresso Mousse.

We first started with tasting dessert and then began making the espresso mousse. At a certain point we needed to let the mixture set in the refrigerator, so we then went through the step by step process in making the tiramisu, starting with mixing the mascarpone cheese, sugar, and eggs, and then dipping the ladyfingers into the cooled espresso coffee.



Each person made their own tiramisu layers in take-home containers, and we finished off the morning completing the mousse in a different container to bring home. A special GRAZIE to my volunteer helpers Teresa Russe, Angie Funaro Wessel and Paolo Bartesaghi in assisting in making this cooking class a delicious and fun success.

## IACC Event Committee



L-R Row 1 Deb Fleishman - Paolo Bartesaghi - Darlene Cross - Patricia Civitate  
L-R Row 2 Michelle Murrow - Teri Righi-Ryner - Jody Paglia - Therese Riordan

Volunteers have been buzzing around the center and much has been accomplished. The courtyard has been transformed, including a rework of our bocce court and fountain, tree trimming, mulching, and a whole lot of weed whacking, pulling, and spraying. Our vintage chairs were given a fresh coat of paint in green, white and red.

There has been much going on inside as well as a legion of helpers have unpacked, moved, cleaned and sorted. We've only just begun...

Several old murals were pulled down and the walls now have a fresh coat of paint. Some rooms were given a new look with some old things.

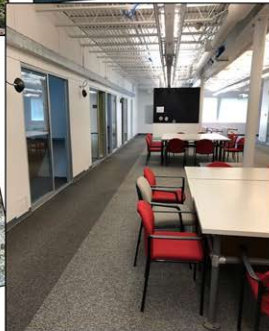
A big thank you to all of the volunteers that have joined us! We hope to see you again.

Please join us for our next Volunteer Day on October 2 starting at 9:00. Lunch will be provided. Please contact [paglia@iaccocfia.org](mailto:paglia@iaccocfia.org) for more information.



ITALIAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER OF IOWA

## Volunteer Day





## 1st Annual Bocce Ball Tournament

Thank you to our teams, sponsors and volunteers for making this event a huge success. It was a beautiful day of sportsmanship, camaraderie and community spirit!



Brad Peterson - Matt Blakely - Dan Childs - Scott Jones



2nd Place:  
Gary Osbourne  
Sara Thompson  
Kim Hammond  
Brenda Coughlin



3rd Place  
Matt Tursi  
Nick Tursi  
Bobby Burgett  
Dylan Gemelli



## In Our Library

La Divina Comedia, or The Divine Comedy, by Dante Alighieri, is one of the classic texts available from our library.



This narrative poem is required reading for many as they complete their education, as it is considered one of the greatest works of world literature. Dante began this work in 1308 and completed it in 1321, right before his death.

If you haven't read it, you are in for an experience.

Dante wrote this poem to share his vision of the state of the soul after death and an imagining of divine judgement. Led by his guides Virgil, (human reason), Beatrice, (divine revelation), and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (mysticism and devotion to Mary), Dante travels through Inferno (Hell), Purgatorio (Purgatory), and Paradiso (Heaven).

The poem describes Dante's imagined journey toward the Triune God, who is found at the end of his journey. This poem is lengthy and full of symbolism. It is not a quick or easy read but is considered by many to be worth the time and effort.

In this year in which we celebrate the 700th year after the death of the author, it might be a good time to pick up this poem and read about Dante's travels.

## Around The Center

by Patricia Civitate

The extreme heat wave of August 2-6 did not affect this year's Bella Italia Day Camp. Under the leadership of camp director, Mrs. "R", aka Therese Riordan, it was day camp as usual.

As the children arrived each day, they went immediately to their places at the tables and began with a variety of activities. At the Italian language sessions they learned to greet one another by exchanging their names with an introduction phrase. They also learned the Italian words for colors and days of the week, names for family members, and similar phrases. Each day Mrs. R read a different story about children in Italy, written and illustrated by Italians.

The campers learned about the euro, and earned them doing various activities. On Wednesday and Friday, they were able to shop in the "mercato" (market) for a variety of games and toys.

As always, the campers enjoyed the cooking classes. This year they made love knot cookies, chocolate peanut butter lasagna, perfect white bread, Italian goat cheese balls, Zeppole (easy Italian donuts), and ice cream in a bag.

A variety of arts and crafts projects/games were explored - among these, Tombola, the Italian version of bingo. In each square, campers wrote words they had learned in Italian. Mrs. R would read the English word to them and they would have to see if they had written the Italian word on their card. If so, they would then cross it off from their game paper.



After listening to the story *Al Dante*, they made individual decks of cards with a picture of different pastas on one side and their design on the other. With these cards they chose an opponent and played a memory card game. And of course there were games of bocce ball on the courtyard of the Cultural Center. We must not forget to mention that they also learned a couple of folk dances. And,



whenever there was a free moment, the children would work on three Italian themed jigsaw puzzles.

Needless to say, it was a very fun filled, busy week, even though it was extremely hot. But the children didn't seem to care.

Special thanks to Debbie Loicomio, Kathy Foggia, and Mrs. "C", who were there to assist and join in the fun. And to the children we say, "we look forward to seeing you and your friends next year."

by Frances P. Graziano



## Italians Have Left Their Mark In Many Fields

From acting to directing, from modelling to photography, from architecture to the many, many artists that were born on Italian soil and graced the world with their genius. The fame of many Italian celebrities has gone beyond the national borders and they are known and admired all over the world. The country has produced world-renowned celebrities who continue to shape today's entertainment industry.

As we celebrate Italian Heritage Month, here are a few you may not have known about:



"From my Neapolitan grandfather, I inherited the moral values that guide me in my life, my love for my family and the importance of a smile", says **Bradley Cooper**. His grandfather Angelo was a policeman, while his grandmother, Assunta Campano, was a very good cook. Both have always tried to convey the passion for the beautiful country and for Italian traditions.



**Kate Walsh** was born in San Jose, California. Her mother, Angela Bocchetto is of Italian descent, with roots from Potenza, in the Southern Italian region of Basilicata.



According to what **Jennifer Aniston** herself narrated and as many of her biographies report on the network, her great-grandparents were originally from Melito di Porto Salvo, in the province of Reggio Calabria.



**Susan Sarandon's** great-grandfather, was a statue-maker who came to America because life was tough for sculptors in Tuscany. On her mother's side, she is of Italian descent, with ancestors from the regions of Tuscany and Sicily. Her great-grandfather came from a small town near Lucca in Tuscany called Coreglia.



Born **Steven Victor Tallarico**, this leader and frontman of the band Aerosmith, is one of the greatest performers of rock world. His grandfather, the musician Giovanni Tallarico, emigrated to the U.S.A. from Cotronei, province of Crotone, in Calabria.



**Cynthia Ann Stephanie Lauper** Her mother, Cyndi has Italian heritage through her mother, Catrine Gallo. Her mother's family is from Palermo, Sicily.



**Sean Penn**, whose mother, Eileen Annucci was from Sardinia, has strong Italian roots. His maternal grandfather was Amerigo Giuseppe Annucci, who was born in New York, to Italian parents, Francisco Annucci and Sophia Bettini from Potenza, Basilicata.



**Ashley Judd's** paternal grandfather was Michael Lawrence Ciminella, the son of Vincenzo Ciminella and Jennie Orlando, who were born in Vicari, Province of Palermo, Sicily, Italy.



"People don't often realize I'm Italian because my last name is French, but my mother is Italian. Her last name is Di Cillo. She is from Arce near Frosinone," say actor **Matt Le Blanc**.



Born **Alicia Augello Cook**, the voice and career of **Alicia Keys** could not have been this successful without the help of her Sicilian mother. from Agrigento and Sciacca.

# 2021-2022 Capital Campaign

## Pledge Form

### ITALIAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER OF IOWA

2633 Fleur Drive, Des Moines IA 50321

I/We intend to support the Campaign with a total donation of

☐ \$50,000   ☐ \$25,000   ☐ \$10,000   ☐ \$5,000   ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Benefactor:** \$50,000 and up - includes naming rights, Benefactor Plaque, priority recognition on web site and Newsletter

Name to appear on Benefactor Plaque \_\_\_\_\_

**Sponsor:** \$10,000 – \$49,999 - includes Sponsor Nameplate, recognition on web site and Newsletter

Name (\$200 per name) to appear on Sponsor Nameplate \_\_\_\_\_

**Supporter:** \$200 - \$9,999 - includes Supporter Nameplate, recognition in Newsletter

Name (\$200 per name) to appear on Supporter Nameplate \_\_\_\_\_

**Friend:** \$1 - \$199 - includes listing on Friends Nameplate

Name (1 only) to appear on Friends List \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I/We would like information on naming rights

☐ I/We would like to remain anonymous

#### Please choose one of the following payment methods:

☐ My/Our donation is paid in full.

☐ Check (payable to the Italian-American Cultural Center of IA)

☐ Credit Card

☐ Discover

☐ Mastercard

☐ Visa

☐ Amex

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CIS \_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I/We would like to make payments over \_\_\_\_ years (up to two) beginning \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_

Please bill me   ☐ Annually   ☐ Semi-Annually   ☐ Quarterly   ☐ Monthly

☐ I/We would like to make a gift of securities/stock. Please call me with procedures.

#### Please complete ALL of the following information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for supporting the Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa.

For questions, please contact Loretta Sieman at 515-689-4451.

*All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.*

# Società Vittoria Italiana

**Next Men's September 19th @ 2:00 pm**

**MONTHLY MEETING:** We would love to see your faces! Haven't been to monthly lodge meeting in a while? Please mark your calendars and join us! We invite fresh ideas and involvement.

**SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER:** The Vittoria Lodge will be hosting a Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner to the public from 11AM to 4PM on Sunday September 26, 2021. The cost per ticket is \$10. We will take every precaution to keep everyone who attends safe. Our hope is to set up tables outside in the Lodge Shelter plus inside the hall. This will be a great opportunity to see fellow lodge members.

**CORN FEED:** The annual Corn Feed was held on August 29. The committee served up corn on the cob, brats, and hot dogs and as well as several delectable sides and desserts. It was a good way to end the summer fun socializing with fellow lodge members.

**LODGE SHELTER:** The lodge shelter is a great place for family and friend gatherings. Open to all members. Contact the lodge if you'd like to reserve.

**LODGE WEBSITE:** We have been upgrading our lodge website. Check us out at <http://vittorialodge.com>.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES:** Please get your membership dues sent in. If you did not receive your membership statement, please contact Squire at 515-577-4283 or email him at [squire@sqireweb.net](mailto:squire@sqireweb.net).

**NEED HELP:** We are looking to update our Veteran's Honor board. If you served or know another member who served and has passed, please get a hold of us so we can add names and honor those veterans. You can send to Rob Fiori at Vittoria Lodge PO Box 1212 Ankeny IA 50021-0975 or [carltree@msn.com](mailto:carltree@msn.com)

**HAPPY SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER BIRTHDAY WISHES TO OUR MEMBERS:** Steven Walker, Mario Medici, Mark Gibbons, Frank Stefani, David Steele, Michael Brooks, Jeremy Brooks, John Romitti, James Romano, Brian Rodenkirk, Ken Magnani, Dominic Berardi, Rob Fiori, Spencer Fontana, Brad Boeckmann, Alex Battani, Joe Ballantini, David Miller, Antonino Cosenza, Jeff Magnani, Ned Chiodo Jr., Richard Fontana, Michael Ugolini, Ron Fontanini, Bill Seamands, Marion Romitti and Roger Stefani **Buon Compleanno!**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**

September 19<sup>th</sup> – Lodge Meeting Polenta Party after meeting  
September 26<sup>th</sup> – Spaghetti & Meatball Dinner  
October 10<sup>th</sup> – IACC Columbus Day Dinner at the Lodge 5PM  
October 17<sup>th</sup> – Clean Up Day & Lodge Meeting  
November 6h – Auxiliary Craft Show  
November 7<sup>th</sup> – Lodge Memorial Mass 9AM  
November 21<sup>st</sup> – Lodge Meeting



# **Italian-American Women of Iowa**

## ***Belle e Forti Le Donne Italo-Americane***

*(Beautiful Strong Italian American Women)*

Saluti dalle Donne ItaloAmericane dell'Iowa!

We had the honor of meeting Miss Natalia Tollari and her family when the IAWI, along with the Variety Club of Iowa, presented her an adaptive bicycle last July. Parents Joe & Amanda Tollari, along with brother Kingston, sister Alessandra, grandparents, and extended family members were present when she took her first ride on her bike at Gray's Lake. Thanks to the Variety Club for connecting us with Natalia. What a beautiful young lady and family.

The wheels were turning in our July meeting when brainstorming ideas for social and community service opportunities. New Social Co-Chairs Pavla DeFrancisco and Jenny Caito-Ellingson presented our group ways to promote our group's image and communal involvement through fundraising, member events, giving back to the community, and community partnerships. It's evident there are many ways we can make an impact in our community. What's great about the IAWI is that we have found ways to achieve these while having fun too!

The women hope to begin this quest by hosting a special event in honor of National Italian American Heritage Month in October. We will announce our plans at a later date. Check upcoming posts on our Facebook page for details.

Milan, Italy is a hot spot for fashion enthusiasts worldwide during Fashion Week held September 21-27, 2021. We need not travel so far to see the beauty of Italian-American women here in Iowa. However, if you'd like to have a little fun in celebration of this event, have a few amiche join you in your own fashion events. Invite some friends to dinner and "Dress to the nines", or find something in your closet you haven't worn in ages and wear it to the grocery store. For fashion ideas, go to La Belle Society's Blog: "[Dress Like an Italian Woman and Look Elegant Daily](https://www.labellesociety.com/2020/04/08/how-to-dress-like-an-italian-woman-in-summer-2020/)", <https://www.labellesociety.com/2020/04/08/how-to-dress-like-an-italian-woman-in-summer-2020/>. But then again, we already know how to do that. ....

A note of thanks to all the IAWI members who have been putting in their time to help transform the Italian Cultural Center of Iowa's new location closer to its vision. Your volunteerism is commendable and much needed. Just another example of the exceptional group of women our organization is comprised of.

A bocce ball team representing IAWI participated in the Italian American Cultural Center's Bocce Ball Tournament fundraiser in August. For a bunch of amateurs, we didn't do too badly. We made it to finals!!!! By the time this article is published, we will be either reaping the joys of victory or drowning our sorrows in some Anisette. Either way, we had a great time engaging in a favorite Italian pastime with a wonderful group of contestants and onlookers. I highly encourage everyone to take advantage of these events. I guarantee you will not regret it.

Since our last article, we lost a dear member, Mary Tonini. Another member, Raymonda Pisut, lost her husband Emery. May their families find comfort knowing our thoughts and prayers are with them.

If you'd like to be part of IAWI, look us up on Facebook or go to <https://italianamericanwomenofiowa.com/> for more information. Meetings are generally held every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month. Ciao!

Respectfully submitted,  
Frances P. Graziano, Secretary