

Italian-American CULTURAL CENTER OF IOWA



NEWSLETTER
SEP/OCT 2025

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Paolo Bartesaghi



E anche quest'anno l'estate sta terminando e si rientra al Lavoro.

The summer is coming to an end, and we are getting back to work.

Thinking about this, it comes to mind that when, after a vacation in the mountains or at the sea, I was back in Milan and the majority of the green in nature that I could see was at the local parks or in the courtyard of the condominium where I lived, or in other courtyards around town. I was lucky enough to have a terrace in Milan but not everyone had one. As I reflected on these images, I began to research about Italian courtyards and their history.

Italian courtyards hold significant historical and cultural importance. They often serve as hidden works of art, reflecting the architectural beauty and historical significance of their surroundings. For instance, Milan's courtyards are not just open spaces but also represent the tranquil side of life in the bustling and sometimes chaotic city, showcasing the architectural diversity of the metropolis. Additionally, the term "Italian courtyard" originated during the communist era, highlighting their cultural significance and association with Italy's identity. Overall, these courtyards are testaments to Italy's timeless charm and artistry, captivating both history enthusiasts and architecture admirers alike.

Florence is a city that seems to have no gardens. Centuries ago, the city walls were constantly extended to make room for more buildings and workshops. And so, green spaces were recreated in the courtyards of the wealthy and aristocrats. They were not exactly gardens in the ancient



meaning of the word, but they were always designed to feature a fountain in the middle or to be evocative of floral and tropical motifs. Some even decorated with coats of arms. *continued*



GRANT SUPPORTERS



WE REFLECT AND REMEMBER

Helen Frances Williams
Richard J. Cordaro
Connie Randa
Albert "Abbie" Polito
Benny Michael Genovese
Joseph Gazzo Romeo
Aldo DeMarco

The GALA DINNER is returning!

The Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa is excited and proud to announce that, after six years, the annual GALA DINNER is returning. Please save the date for November 6, 2025.

The fundraiser event will be held at the Krause Gateway Center in downtown Des Moines, with an incredible dinner prepared by Barilla chef Lorenzo Boni, one of only two Barilla chefs residing in the United States.

This GALA will be full of information and news regarding our remodeling, honoring a few of our supporters, and celebrating the next phase before our grand opening in the fall of 2026.

The year in front of us will be an exciting one.

Please view additional details and information on our website, Eventbrite, or by contacting Paolo Bartesaghi at Bartesaghi@iaccofia.org.



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**Jeff & Linda
Lamberti**

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Sieman**



AND SO IT BEGINS.....

It was a true "Who's Who" of city, county, and state leaders—complete with the Governor, the Mayor, and the Polk County Supervisors—all gathered with silver shovels in hand to celebrate our Groundbreaking!



Dear Friends of the Center,

As we move toward October 2026, our hearts are filled with gratitude for everyone who has been by our side on this incredible journey. The Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa will become a special place in our community because of your generosity, your hard work, and your unwavering support.

To our clubs, neighbors, friends, Heritage Advisory Council, partners in state, city, and county government, and to the many donors across Iowa who have given their time, talents, and energy—we couldn't have come this far without you.

We know our forefathers would be proud to see how we continue to celebrate and share our heritage—both here at home and with all who join us in enjoying the beauty of Italian culture.

Together,
we are making it happen!

Italian-American Cultural
Center of Iowa
Board of Directors



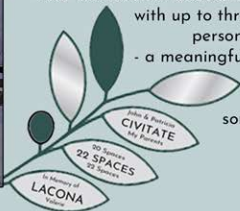
THE OLIVE TREE: A SYMBOL OF FAMILY AND HERITAGE

In Italian culture, the olive tree represents strength, resilience, and deep roots—much like the bonds of family. Just as the tree endures through generations, so too does the love and connection shared by family members. Strong, rooted, and ever-growing, the olive tree symbolizes the enduring legacy of our Italian heritage.



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Questions?
Contact defazio@iaccoffia.org



DAY CAMP 2025

This year's Italian Day Camp was held in the Scornovacca's party room from July 28 - August 1. We celebrated some Italian festivals and the places where they are held.

On Monday, campers learned a little about Florence, Italy, and La Festa della Rificolona. They made paper lanterns, snacked on Italian fruit salad, and practiced their colors and numbers in Italian. Campers started putting together the puzzles of the Italian flag and the map of Italy, which they took apart and put back together several times during the week. They also learned about ways to earn "Euros", which they were able to spend in the camp Mercato.

On Tuesday, the celebration was in Venice at Carnevale. Campers made masks, prepared Crockpot Meatball Stone Soup for Wednesday, and snacked on tramezzini (sandwiches). They played Vedo Qualcosa (I Spy) to practice color words. They also learned some songs in Italian. A parade, wearing their new masks and carrying their lanterns, was held in and around the restaurant.

Wednesday was the day for celebrating Rome's birthday. Campers sang Happy Birthday in Italian and ate the soup they made the day before. They talked about the artistic treasures in Rome and made their own clay creations. They also enjoyed sketching in their sketchbooks and coloring the "color by number" (colors in Italian and English) pictures in the back of their camp booklets. This was also the day for the opening of the Mercato. Campers used the "Euros" they earned during the week to buy items in the store or chances for Friday's drawing.



Thursday brought the Lemon Festival (La Sagra del Limone) in Monterosso. Campers made a layered lemon dessert and painted, finishing off their pictures with lemon juice. There was more singing and a game of 'Ms. R Says', using the Italian number words. They also played a matching game using the words they had learned during the week.



Friday's celebration was Festa dell'Unicorno, which is held in Vinci, the home of Leonardo da Vinci. This festival is one of fantasy, and campers were encouraged to design their own inventions and fantasy creatures. The snack was Nutella cookies which was one of their favorite snacks for the week. It was also the day for bocce ball, which campers had been looking forward to. It was a very close game and everyone had fun playing. This was the final day for the Mercato and the drawings. Congratulations to the winners.

A thank you goes out to the parents and campers who helped during the week by attending camp or helping to clean up and organize. A special thanks goes to Scornovacca's Ristorante for allowing us to hold camp in their party room. It was a nice space for our activities. We're looking forward to another Italian Day Camp in 2026.



IN OUR LIBRARY

by Therese Riordan

With the end of summer, and growing season nearly over, I thought sharing a couple of summertime recipes from *Cucina italiana*, the Cultural Center cookbook, would be appropriate. (The cookbook is currently out of production and sold out but a copy is in our library.)

The first recipe was sent to us by Anne Righi who got it from cousins in Italy.

Zucchini Pasta Sauce

3 or 4 small zucchini, unpeeled ½ stick margarine
2 medium onions, chopped ½ tsp rosemary
3 cloves garlic, chopped ½ tsp. parsley
½ cream (of 1 cup half 'n half) salt and pepper

Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil and margarine until transparent. Chunk zucchini and add to oil cooking only until tender. Cook pasta and toss with zucchini mixture and cream. Salt and pepper to taste.

The second recipe was sent to us by Rose Soda.

Peaches

Dough:

4 eggs 1 ½ cups sugar 4 cups flour
¼ cup milk ½ cup oil 1 tsp baking powder

Mix eggs, sugar, oil, and milk. Then add flour and baking powder. Roll into small balls "like a walnut". Bake at 350 Degrees until lightly brown. Let cool. At this time the cookie can be frozen for filling at a later time. When ready to use, hollow each cookie from the bottom with a melon baller. Fill with cream.

Filling:

6 egg yolks Crème d' Almond 2 cups milk
Sugar or dried red Jello 6 tbsp flour

After cookies have been hollowed out, brush the insides with Crème d' Almond. Put filling in two hollowed out cookies. Hold cookies together for a minute until the two cookies hold together. Have a small dish ready with Cream d' Almond in one and either sugar or dry red Jello in the other. Roll each cookie in the Cream d' Almond first and then in the Jello mix.



Several people have asked about the display of our flags and the order in which they are flown. I would like to clarify this point.

Here is the rule regarding flying the US flag, a state flag, and a flag from another nation:

- When the flags are displayed on separate flagpoles, the US flag should be on its own to the left (to the observer) and should be flown at the same height when displayed with other National flags. Any US state flag should be placed on the far right (to the observer). See above for correct order (to the observer)

FOLLOW OUR JOURNEY

Join us on this exciting journey as we transform the historic Butler Mansion into the Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa. Follow along for updates, stories, and milestones as we bring this dream to life.



www.iaccofia.org



Continued from Page 1

Many were of the aristocratic families, each with a different history, and many and different were their courtyards, designed for everyday use and a model for subsequent constructions, as can be seen at the Istituto degli Innocenti, where its' two courtyards were the first in the history of architecture which divided the world into two realms, one for men and one for women.



In so many Italian cities and towns one cannot realize that there is a beautiful courtyard hidden behind the façade of a building. But, in many locations today, the huge wooden doors to the main entrance are opened and one can get a glimpse of the inner courtyards from a short distance, whether they remain on the sidewalk or walk up to the beautifully decorated iron gates that only allow the residents to enter further into the area. Some courtyards have become more functional to provide parking spaces for their residents and have limited space for plants or statues.

Today, many Italian courtyards will have a functional flair with potted plants that range from colorful geraniums and azaleas to a variety of cooking herbs, including oregano, sage, rosemary, and, naturally, lots of basil for the residents to use. You will see rock or stone pathways and possibly a signature fountain. In southern Italy, one may see lemon and orange trees along with olive trees and, occasionally, grape vines spreading over an interior pergola. Those courtyards with interior balconies will have cascading geraniums adding color and beauty to the area.

I hope you found this interesting and, as always, I thank you for your continued support of the Italian-American Cultural Center of Iowa as we spread Italian culture throughout the community.



THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE VITTORIA LODGE

The first day of autumn happens this month. The daylight hours become cooler and even shorter but a few warm days may linger. And there are apples — along with everything apple-scented and apple-flavored. Let's not forget cooler evenings and fewer mosquitoes. Hello September and the beginning of our activities!

September 21st: Meeting at 2:00 followed by a polenta party. Please bring your favorite topping.

October 19th: Lodge cleanup day begins at 8:00 AM, Lunch at noon, Meeting at 2:00

November 1st: 10:00-3:00 - *Annual Christmas at the Vittoria Lodge* - **Come to shop at more than 20 booths, purchase a delicious treat at the bake sale, and enjoy a pasta lunch.**

November 16th: Lunch at 12:30, Meeting at 2:00

December 5th: 2nd Annual *Presidents' Holiday Party* for all adult members 6:00 PM to 10:00.

Members recently gathered for the annual lodge picnic held in August.

We hope to see all our members at our meetings and planned events.

Roger Fiori
President, Vittoria Lodge

Deb Fleishman
President, Vittoria Lodge Auxiliary



ITALIAN AMERICAN WOMEN OF IOWA (IAWI)
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
NEWSLETTER

Monthly Meetings are held on the **4th Tuesday of the month!**

Membership Dues:

If you would like to join IAWI, it is **\$25 for members under 65, \$15 for seniors 65-74, and 75 and older are Life Members and have free membership.** If you have any questions or need a membership form, please contact Lucrezia Moore at [\(515\) 710-1247](tel:5157101247) or visit our website ItalianAmericanWomenofIowa.com

Cheer and Sympathy:

If you would like a card sent to one of our members, contact Gracy Kirkman at [\(515\) 321-7178](tel:5153217178)

Recent Events:

- Group of members met at Water Works to listen to free music
- Annual Picnic/Meeting
 - Got to hand out our IAWI scholarship to Sailor Grace Schervish
- Member movie night
 - Watched Italian movie and had snacks

Important Upcoming Events:

- Cooking classes for members leading up to Graziano's Bake Sale
 - Wandas - September 27th
 - Love Knots - October 4th
- Bake sale at Graziano's - October 18th
- Trunk or Treat - October 25th
 - 2:00-3:30

Follow us for information on what's happening for IAWI!

- Facebook - IAWI IA
- Instagram - italianamericanwomenofIowa