



Grandma's Lessons: *Buon Appetito*

By Elaine Rose Ognibene

When I was growing up, my father lost his job, and my family had to move in with Grandmother and Grandfather Siragusa. Both of them had come to Rochester, New York from Sicily: Grandpa Charlie at nine years old and Grandma Rose as a teenager. Living with my grandma for three years taught me about my heritage. I acquired fascinating information: how to rid a visitor from *mal occhio*, how to shop for fresh ricotta or parmesan from the Italian market on Union

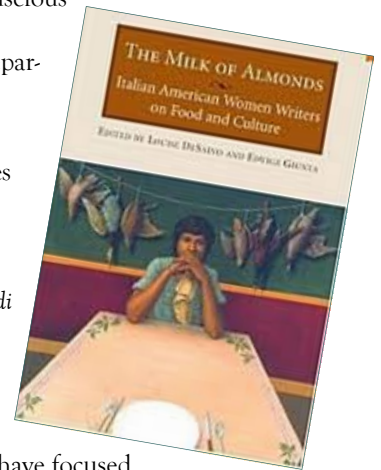


Street, how to mix the proper ingredients and roll the meatballs so they would be just-the-right-size for the linguini, and most of all how to prepare food for the people you love.

Whether it was two teaspoonfuls of coffee with fresh cream from the top of the milk bottle, along with fresh Italian bread to break and dunk in the "Grandma's bowl," or preparing pasta on the table and hanging it on the clothes lines down in the basement after rolling out the dough and cutting neat lines for the fettuccini or square edges for the ravioli, I learned how important food was in our Italian-American family. The delicious, multiple-course Sunday meal that took

hours to consume, the chocolate-liquor cookies drenched in white frosting that looked like black snowballs, the St. Joseph's Table that brought in the entire neighborhood for luscious pastas with greens, pastries to die for, St. Joseph bread and oranges to take home: all of those acts expressed my grandmother's gourmet power of preparing food and her generosity of spirit in sharing it with others.

My stories about grandma are numberless. I keep them with me and they make me smile. I am sure that the readers of *Siamo Qui* have similar stories and memories. After reading numerous books by Italians and Italian-Americans, male and female, I know the important role that food plays in their lives. For example, Commissario Guido Brunetti, in Donna Leon's detective series set in Venice, desires pizza for lunch, one with "mozzarella di bufala and pomodorini," as he searches for a criminal. Arriving home, however, he "rejoiced in the sight and scent" of "fusilli with black olives and mozzarella" that his wife Paulo had prepared for him (*The Girl of His Dreams*, 2008). Brunetti was not alone in literature. Writing about food, American writers of various ethnic groups and writers from other nations have focused on the psychological, economic, social and political implications of food making and eating (Laura Esquivel's *Like Water for Chocolate*, 1989).



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello Everyone,

I wanted to say Spring is here and it's time for some warm weather...but it's actually snowing out and the weatherman is talking about more on the way. At a time when snowbirds will be flying home. I'm ready to head South.

This issue is packed with events from Spring right through the Fall. The Women's League, IACC Social Committee and the Men's Club have been working hard on plans to add even more fun activities.

In addition to the list of upcoming events the *Siamo Qui* is also expanding. There are three new feature articles we hope will appear every month. **Member Profile:** This month profiles Ben Sano, our master carpenter and his wife Margaret. Our secretary, Linda Sciocchetti, was cleaning up some files and came across a folder of really old copies of *Siamo Qui*. She thought it would be fun to reprint some of these articles in **Remember When? Bel' Italia** will provide our membership a forum to share their travel photos from various towns or regions in Italy. We hope you enjoy the new features.

Congratulations to everyone who worked on the St Joseph's / St Patrick's Mass & Brunch. It was very successful.

I want to wish everyone a Happy Easter!

Buona Pasqua!

George Urciuoli, IACC President

April Calendar

View our complete online Calendar at calendarwiz.com/iacc

Every Monday	Italian Grand Buffet
Every Wednesday	IACC Open Bowling 6:00 PM
April 9	Children's Easter Party 1 PM
April 13	Women's League 6:30 PM
April 14	Men's Bocce Meeting 6:00 PM Men's Club Dinner/Meeting 6:30 PM Wine Making Demo 7:00 PM
April 19	Board Meeting 6:30 PM
April 24	Easter Buffet 12 - 4 PM Italian Club Restaurant
April 27	Book Club 7:00 PM
April 28	Festa Meeting 6:00 PM

See pages 9 and 10 for additional coming events.

ITALIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER

257 Washington Avenue Extension
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*a place where family and friends can
meet, eat, play and
celebrate Italian heritage*

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Linda Sciocchetti IACC Secretary
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Please submit articles, suggestions, or comments to:
Rachel Cameron, Editor, rcamero@nycap.rr.com

22nd ANNUAL Women's League

Mother - Daughter Luncheon & Fashion Show

"Tulips in Spring Time"

Sunday, May 15th

DOORS OPEN AT 12:30 PM

Tickets \$22.00 | Children 12 and under FREE

Choice of Eggplant Rollatini ~ Grilled Salmon ~ Chicken Marsala
includes Caesar Salad, Rolls & Coffee

For our children Macaroni & Cheese ~ Chicken Fingers, Fries ~ Beverage
Luncheon finishes with Chocolate Mocha Cake & Ice Cream

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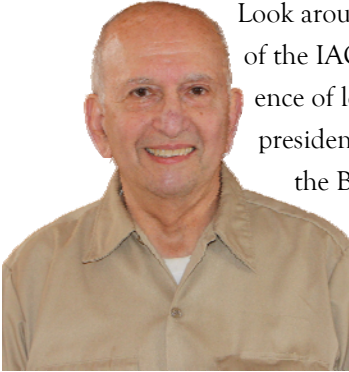
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Member Profile Ben Sano

By Anna Acconi



Look around the buildings and grounds of the IACC and you will view the influence of long-term member and former president, Ben Sano. As chairperson of the Building and Grounds Committee for many years, Ben worked with his team of core members, Larry Franchini, Al Sacca, Tony Mirabile, Nick

Mancini, and Mario Ferrarese, to make improvements on the property by analyzing needs, deciding on a course of action, and implementing a plan. This plan often involved sweat equity of the committee's members. The pavilion kitchen, the garden, the bocce courts, the canopy and front entrance are among the additions to the IACC that can be attributed to the work of Ben Sano and his team.



Ben was born in Albany and grew up in the house his grandfather built about 10

years after arriving from Castrolreale, Sicily, in 1903 as a master carpenter. In fact, Ben is descended from many generations of carpenters who practiced their trade with pride and passion. Ben loved carpentry, but his mother wanted him to become a doctor. Ben attended Siena College for two years as

a pre-med student until one day, while working in the lab on a beautiful spring day, he had an epiphany and realized that



he needed to pursue his desire to work as a carpenter. Ben made his decision and never looked back, joining his father's carpentry business, eventually becoming a full partner of A.B. Sano & Son, Inc. He worked together with his father for 42

years and later with 3 of his sons, never considering his work as labor. "For me, working is a joy. It's my life. If you enjoy what you are doing, it's never work."

Ben has been married to his beautiful wife, Margaret, for almost 59 years and, together, in the house he and his father built, raised 4 sons and 2 daughters. Ben and Margaret currently have 14 grandchildren and are expecting their first great-grandchild. Ben, never idle, finds joy working in his shop, repairing items for the family and building wooden automobiles. A number of years ago, Ben obtained pews from St. Anthony's Church and, from them, created more than 300 crosses, which he has given away as gifts. From his family and his work, Ben Sano has derived a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment and joy. The IACC is fortunate to have had the services of this dedicated, passionate man who, like Sinatra, did what he had to do and did it his way. When asked about his deep and passionate feelings about the IACC, Ben comments, "I can't help it. I am a Sicilian."

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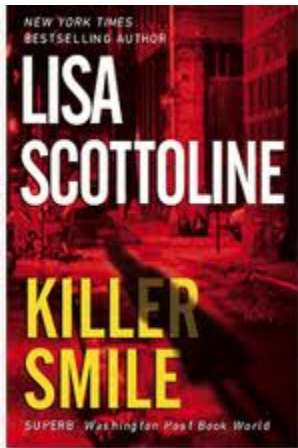
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HOME STANDBY GENERATORS

10,000 Italian-Americans Jailed During WWII

The Book Club of the Italian American Community Center will host a discussion of Lisa Scottoline's *Killer Smile* on **Wednesday, April 27th at 7:00 PM** in the Board Room. Trained as a lawyer, Scottoline turned to writing fiction and is now the author of nineteen best-selling books. *Killer Smile* is a



book derived from her personal life. After her grandparents' death, Scottoline found their "enemy alien" registration cards from the WW II era. Scottoline did not know about the registration system that ensnared 600,000 Italian-Americans. She also did not know that another 10,000 were sent to internment camps across the country, even though they had committed no crimes and many had sons in the army fighting against Mussolini.

Killer Smile is a mystery inspired by this little-known fact about Italian-Americans. Her lead character, Mary Di Nunzio, is a young lawyer with the Philadelphia firm of Rosato and Associates. To settle some estate issues, family members and some Italian business leaders want Mary to investigate the supposed internment camp "suicide" of Amadeo Brandolini in 1942. They believed that it was unlikely for Brandolini to kill himself. He was a Catholic and a person devoted to his family and the idea of achieving a better life by coming to America. If he was murdered, no one could figure out a reason for it.

Mary visits Amadeo's grave and internment camp in Montana and finds clues that could help solve the mystery, but also put her in danger. *Killer Smile* is a gripping, fast-paced tale that is at times comical, nerve-wracking, and enlightening. From this book, we learn about the heritage of Italian-Americans and the life style of those who were immigrants and their contemporary descendants. Lisa Scottoline is a successful Italian-American writer whose insights about our common ethnic background are interesting and provocative. Come and join the discussion on **April 27th** and bring your own stories. Bring a friend as well. The Book Club is free and open to the public. One does not have to be an IACC member to participate in this enjoyable cultural event.

For information contact Dick Ognibene at rtognibene@nycap.n.com or 372.4919

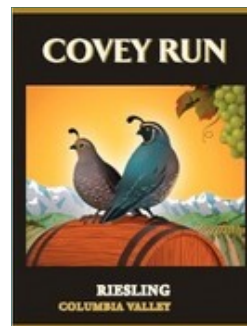


I'd like to admit something to you, but before I do so I first need to lay down a little groundwork.

I'm a man. I do manly things. I know how to replace head gaskets and brakes. I like to chop wood. I'm a master of the barbeque. I leave the seat up. I order my steak rare, and I only do that because restaurants always insist on cooking it just a little bit. Sometimes I'll go days without shaving in an effort to achieve that Robert Redford/Jeremiah Johnson look. I'm the one who's called when a spider enters the room. I used to own a pickup truck and loved looking for things to "haul". When offered two side dishes at a restaurant I usually go with two incarnations of a potato.

I like sweet wine, ok? I admit it. Big deal. There's nothing wrong with a nice glass of sweet wine. We don't have to drink things that are barely palatable to prove our manliness. (Do we?) I'm a big fan of Rieslings, both for their crispness and chameleon like character they take on when paired with food. The Italian Club offers Covey Run Riesling, and I've found this to be a very pleasant little wine.

Rieslings hail from Germany, but are grown all over the world. They can be sweet or dry, so check the label if you're unsure. Some of the best producers come out of Washington where the varietal is on the rise. (Washington State know nothing good that is. We all comes out of D.C.) Typical to a Washington State Riesling, Covey Run's Riesling is a light, crisp, easy-drinking wine with peachy notes and a sweet finish. Also typical is its ability to act as the perfect accompaniment to a wide range of foods, from Pasta Primavera to an extra rare steak with fries and mashed potatoes. Rieslings are like jeans. They go with basically everything.



This month, as you scour the menu at the Italian Club Restaurant for something different or are unsure of what to order along with your dinner, consider Covey Run Riesling. It may not put hair on your chest, but it sure is delicious.

Salute!

Remember When?

Excerpt from *Siamo Qui* November 1, 1973

SIAMO QUI (We are here)

A publication of the Italian-American Community Center of the Capital District, Inc.

Vol. 1 No. 7

NOVEMBER 1, 1973

F. Joseph Leone, Editor

Cornerstone Dedication Held October 12, 1973

The beautiful new home of the Italian community was symbolically dedicated on Friday, October 12, 1973 at 2:00 P.M. Mayor Corning and Chairman Colonna and other city representatives were in attendance. Speakers were Chairman Colonna and Mayor Corning. Other city representatives in attendance were District Attorney Arnold Proskin, City Court Judge Morton M. Z. Lynn, Surrogate Judge John McCall, Judge Joseph Yavonditte, Assemblyman Fred Field, Corporation Counsel John W. Hacker, Superintendent of Parks Sal Garufi, and Architect Harris Sanders and Banker Spence Peckham.

Father Joseph Romano gave the invocation and blessed the cornerstone. Mayor Corning delivered a most sincere and eloquent address expressing his great pleasure that the Italian community was so quickly approaching its goal of a new home.

Chairman Colonna said in part: "... the new center should be a repository for books and information pertaining to Italian culture and such information should be disseminated throughout the area to foster a better understanding between people of difference ethnic backgrounds."

Columbus Day Color

City Hall flew a flag a week. It was a 5'x8' flag, which replaced the one that the Banker's Trust, in appreciation for their bank in other banks meant that their banks Columbus Day.

Grazie, Mayor Corning

We gratefully acknowledge the contribution made by the Hon. Erastus Corning, 2nd, to the Italian-American Community Center. Mayor Corning stated his great interest in the Center at the cornerstone dedication ceremonies on October 12, 1973, spoke again at the Columbus Day Dinner Dance on October 14, 1973, and backed it up financially within a week. That's real follow through, Mr. Mayor. Thanks again.

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"... the new center should be a repository for books and information pertaining to Italian culture and such information should be disseminated throughout the area to foster a better understanding between people of difference ethnic backgrounds."

"A recreation field, swimming pool, bocce court and health club are included in the plans to attract the young and athletically inclined of our membership. And finally, this building will be used as a place to gather to sing, dance, eat well, and imbibe in the fermented juice of the grape."

Grazie, Signore Marcelle And DiGiulio

John DiGiulio of DiGiulio Excavation has volunteered to provide compacted earth to receive macadam for the service road to the new building. And lo and behold, doesn't A. J. "Doc" Marcelle of Callanan Industries volunteer to put in the service road. The Italian-American Community Center is most appreciative of Mr. Marcelle's and Mr. DiGiulio's generous support.

November 12

Completion, it becomes a program be established by members. Joseph DeLuca, Deputy Chairman, has the following list of names: Titelli, John Tirino, Mike Nardolillo, Graziano, and Iva. Plans are for children's programs to attend the Monday, November 12, second floor of the building on Lark Street.

Received

Assembled at the 481st anniversary by Christopher Columbus music of Tony and spirited morning, Grand Vice-Council, applauded dillo for the Mr. Nardillo Co-Chairman and program

Day Dinner By Columbus Center will

part-time hours a Chairman dillo (489

Women's League

Girls' Night Out



We always have such a great time on BINGO night, so we have decided to play a few games at our April meeting. We'll provide the game cards and prizes. We need you as our players.

Wednesday, April 13 at 6:30 PM
Chicken Parmesan, Manicotti, or
North Atlantic Salmon
\$20 all inclusive

Please contact Santa Pasquini by
Monday, April 11 at

489-3949 or nonnasp@netzero.com

Cancellation policy is in effect.

Everyone had such a great time at our March meeting. The jewelry was beautiful. We added a nice sum to our Women's League treasury. Thank you to all who attended the meeting. A special thank you to our guest.

Also, at our March meeting, many committee chairs reported on upcoming Women's League events. On Saturday, April 9, we are sponsoring the Children's Easter Party from 1 until 3 PM. The Easter Bunny will have dessert with the children and the DJ will provide music for all to enjoy. Please see the flyer included in this issue of *Siamo Qui* for more details. We also have our annual Mother/Daughter Luncheon coming up on May 15. Please see further details in this issue also. Hope you all will support these two very important events.

In September, our Fabulous Fall Festival will feature crafters in the pavilion and a farmers' market on the lawn. Please attend our next meeting to find out more about this event and how you can help.

Maria La Morte has been appointed Chairperson of our Nominating Committee. Please contact Maria if you are interested in running for an office of the Women's League. We will need to fill all four positions this year, so it is important for anyone who is interested to contact Maria.

Mark your calendars for April 13, so you won't miss our next meeting. In addition to getting caught up on all of our upcoming events, we will have a great evening of BINGO! See you there!

Gail Tarantino, Women's League President

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Numerous women writers, however, capture the important role that food plays in Italian-American literature and life. In Louise DeSalvo and Edvige Giunta's anthology, called *The Milk of Almonds* (*granite di mandorle*), Italian-American authors tell secrets about unmet hungers and use food as the medium for their message. Cooking and eating, as well as the way that recipes are transmitted and foods are prepared, are central to these works that illuminate how our culture can not be fully understood without a careful consideration of the vital place of food. Because *Siamo Qui's* habit has been to share recipes, I will share a few words about food from *The Milk of Almonds*: two from stories in the section "Ceremonies" and two poems – one from "Awakenings" and the other from "Encounters" – to illustrate my point, and I will close with a tasty recipe.

In "Kitchen Communion" (p. 49-56), Camilla Trinchier's family thanks their mother "for the bounty of her table," knowing full well that she is up to "weighing the children down, hoping she can anchor" them forever. "The Seven Sacraments," by Mary Beth Caschetta, excels in the category of both religion and returning to one's heritage. A child who grew up pretending that she "wasn't Italian," Caschetta reclaims her faith and her roots by cooking for the family's Christmas meal. Metaphorically associating each sacrament with a particular meal (egs. Baptism with Linguine with Clam Sauce and Eucharist with Garlic Filet of Sole over Lemon Risotto), she cooks her way back to God (p. 67-75).

In the poem "Hot Peppers," Rina Ferrarelli takes a protective and explosive approach.



Bright red
and pointed like horns
weapons against the evil eye
antidotes against decay
lean and dry, ascetic
extreme like saints
revolutionaries
that set everything on fire. (p. 152)

"We Begin with Food", Rosette Capotoro's poem, however, is about a grandmother who generates a holy experience.

my grandmother's
arms rolled five pounds of flour
into *cavatelli* on a Sunday morning
labor & love &
the planting of
flowers and fruit...
taste this...



let me eat and drink of you (p. 102-104)

Thirty other writers contribute to *The Milk of Almonds*. Although contributions differ in subject and style, this anthology reveals the power of food for Italian-American women in time of poverty and prejudice, success and celebration, loss and spiritual recovery. Humor, historical insights, recipes, family trials and joys invite readers to participate. *Buon appetito!*

Fettuccine with Walnuts Zucchini Ribbons and Pecorino Romano

By Elaine Rose Ognibene



- 2 ½ pounds small zucchini, untrimmed
- 1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
- garlic cloves, pressed
- anchovy fillets, minced (about one tablespoon)
- 1/2 teaspoon (scant) dried crushed red pepper
- pound fettuccine
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3/4 cup walnuts, toasted, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup (packed) thinly sliced fresh basil
- 1/3 cup (packed) chopped fresh mint
- Fresh zucchini flowers (optional)

Place one zucchini on a work surface (or board). Using a vegetable peeler (or grater side slit), and firmly holding zucchini by stem end, shave zucchini lengthwise into long ribbons. Discard scraps. Repeat with remaining zucchini. Place ribbons in a large colander set over a large bowl, sprinkle with one teaspoon salt. Let stand for 30 minutes. Rinse zucchini under cold running water; drain well. Spread on 2 large kitchen towels, roll up in towels to absorb excess water. Set aside.

Combine garlic, anchovy, and crushed red pepper in a very large serving bowl. Using pestle or wooden spoon, crush mixture until paste forms.

Cook pasta in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender but still firm to bite. Drain, reserving ½ cup cooking liquid. Transfer pasta to bowl with garlic mixture.

Add 1/3 cup oil and ¼ cup reserved cooking liquid; toss.

Add zucchini, walnuts, ½ cup cheese, basil and mint; toss. Season with salt and pepper, adding more pasta cooking liquid if mixture is dry. Drizzle with additional oil. Sprinkle with zucchini flowers, if desired.

Serve with remaining cheese.

Eat and enjoy!

IACC Social Activities By Angie Groelz

As part of the Italian American Community Center, the Social Activities Committee provides members with opportunities to gather with family and friends in order to celebrate the spirit of the Italian heritage we all cherish and want to share with our younger generation.

Angie Groelz is Chair of the Social Activities Committee. The committee members are Maria De Nitto, Maria Marchio, Mary Lou Marando, Santa Pasquini, Gail Tarantino, Donna Zumbo, Dick Ognibene, and Rosanna Aiuppa.

The committee has been very active this past winter, organizing several wonderful events including Ballroom Dance Lessons, Open Bowling, and the Annual Mid-Winter Dinner Dance (*Notte Toscana* "A Night in Tuscany").

In addition to our favorite annual summer and fall events such as Pool Closing Party and Columbus Day Dinner Dance, we are proud to announce *new* activities for this coming summer and fall.

May 21	Bus Trip to Arthur Avenue, NYC (Men's Club)
June 17	Pizza/Bocce/Swim Family Night (Men's Club)
July 10	Family Picnic at the Pool
July 22, 23, & 24	Festa (IAHFI)
August 6	Luau at the Pool
September 25	Harvest Fall Festival (Women's League)

View our complete online Calendar at calendarwiz.com/iacc

Bel' Italia

There are so many beautiful sites in Italy including gorgeous landscapes, glorious cathedrals, and lush vineyards. Many of our members have travelled extensively throughout magnificent Italy. In the age of digital photography, it is not uncommon to take several hundred photos while traveling. The purpose of this new feature, *Bel' Italia*, is to provide a place for members to share a few (4 - 6) memorable photos from their travels to a particular town or region in Italy.

Please send your photos via e-mail to Rachel Cameron at rcamero@nycap.rr.com. Since *Cultural Corner* and *Member Profile* are both about Sicilians in this issue, we thought we would continue that theme with photos of the town of Cefalu', Sicily from Roy Cameron.



Children's Easter Party Hey Kids

come meet the

Easter Bunny!



Saturday, April 9

1:00 to 3:00 PM

Adults \$5.00

Children under 10 Free

We provide cupcakes,
pastries, coffee, tea,
juice, soda.

Visit with the
Easter Bunny

and have your picture taken.

Craft-making for children.



Make your reservations by Monday, April 4

Call the IACC Office at 456-4222.

Sponsored by the IACC Women's League

IACC Men's Club



SPRING 2011 MEN'S CLUB SCHEDULE

April 14, 6:00 PM Bocce Meeting
6:30 PM Dinner Meeting \$10
7:00 PM Guest Speaker Roger Savoy of the
Homebrew Emporium will give a
demo and talk on art of making
homemade wine



May 12, 6:30 PM Dinner Meeting \$10

May 21 Bus Trip to Arthur Ave, NYC

Some of the ideas we are working on include a bus
trips to North End, Boston, bocce tournament, cook-
ing lessons, planting fig trees around the IACC
grounds and guest speakers.

If anyone has a project you would like to explore
please bring it to my attention and together we will
make it happen.

John Ritz 477.7477

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CARING & SHARING By Anna Acconi

April Birthdays:

Anthony Carioto	Isabel Mancini
Ennio Corsi	Robert Michel
Nicholas Criscione	David Parente
Angelo Culmo	Virginia Piogia
Christina Dillon	Mary Lou Ritz
Clara Ferrarese	Theresa Russo
Louise Giuliano	Margaret Sano
Amy Infante	Lawrence Scarano
Rev. Dominic Ingemie	Gloria Yacono

Condolences:

The IACC mourns the loss of **James La Rosa**, husband of **Frances**, who passed away on February 24. James, a graduate of St. John's University, retired as Supervisor of Investigation for the NYS Department of Civil Service. We send our sympathy to the entire La Rosa family.

Congratulations:

Connie and Joe Dominski announce the birth of their first grandchild, Angelina Rose Erno born March 8, 2011 to parents Gina & Dale Erno.

IAHFi Pavilion Reservations

The IACC office is now taking reservations for use of the IAHFi Pavilion. You may reserve the pavilion from May through September. The suggested donation for the day is \$250 for members and \$400 for non-members. \$100 will be returned after your event, if the pavilion is cleaned up. Use of the pavilion gives you access to our Bocce Courts, Horseshoe Pit, Basketball Court, Children's Play Area, and our large lawn for field sports. Call the IACC office for more information or to reserve the pavilion for your event.



Access Database Expert Needed

It has been a number of years since we have done work on our Member Database. Is there a member who has Microsoft Access Database skills beyond the basics? If you are interested or not sure if your skill level would be helpful, please call the office 456-IACC (4222) and talk with Linda Sciocchetti, Membership Secretary. After discussing the changes that are needed, you can decide if your skills match the job.



Join us for the 2011 Bocce Season

IACC Men's Bocce League. Our season will begin on Monday, May 9, and consists of fourteen weeks plus playoffs. No special talent is needed to play.

Even if you have never played bocce before, please consider joining us to have some laughs and fun.

There is no charge for members to play bocce. Any non-members interested in joining the league, there is a \$50 charge. We play every Monday night at 6:30

PM. There will be a meeting for all interested players at 6:00 PM Thursday, April 14, before the regularly scheduled Men's Club meeting that evening. Please come and join us and stay for the Men's Club meeting as well. Have a pasta dinner (only \$10) and we'll talk some bocce. New players please contact Jim Sano at 438.4631.



Women's Bocce Begins May 18th

Ladies, please join us for the 2011 Women's Bocce League. All female members are eligible to join the league. Our first game is on Wednesday, May 18th at 6:00 PM. Thereafter, we play on Tuesday nights at 6:30 PM. If you are interested in playing, please call Donna Zumbo at 452.2617. No special talent is needed to play. Why not join us for some great fun?!!



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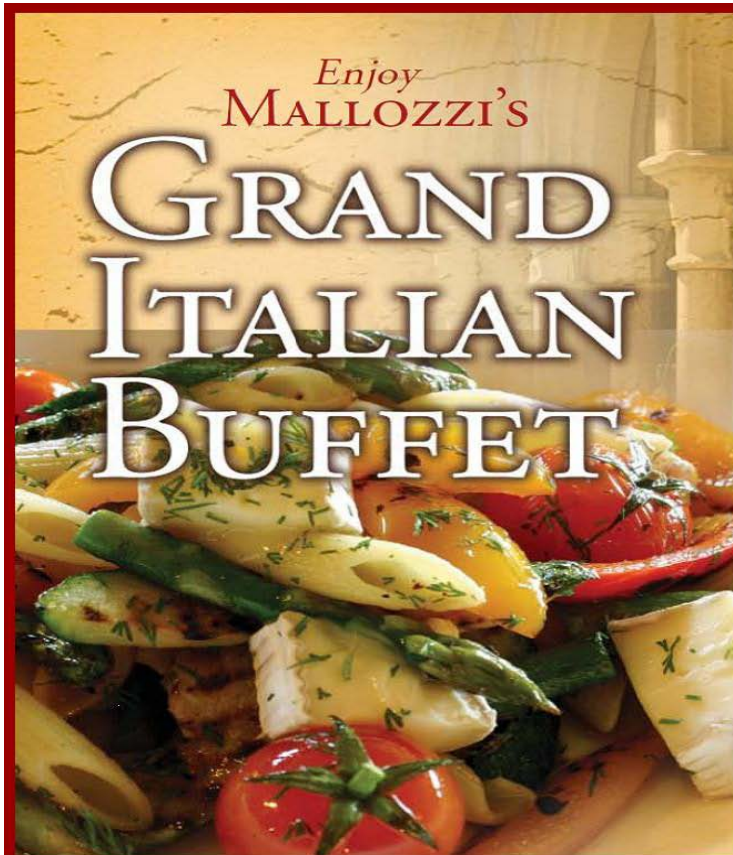
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